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Millennium : or the thousand years of
prosperity, promised to the Church of God
Old Testament and in the New, shortly to

E. H. Gilbert

MIL

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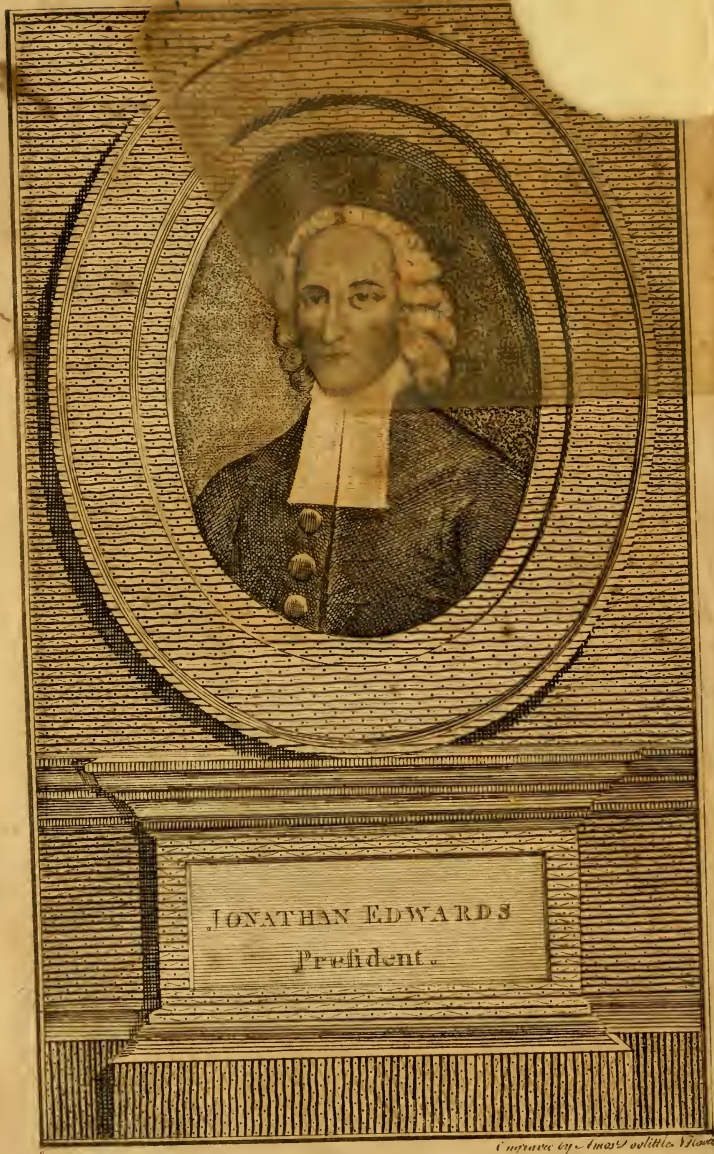
JONATHAN EDWARDS
President.

THE

MILLENNIUM;

OR, THE

THOUSAND YEARS OF PROSPERITY,

PROMISED TO THE

CHURCH OF GOD,

IN THE OLD TESTAMENT AND IN THE NEW,

SHORTLY TO

COMMENCE,

AND TO BE CARRIED ON TO

PERFECTION,

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF *HIM*,

WHO, IN THE *VISION*, WAS PRESENTED TO ST. *JOHN*.

AND I SAW, AND, BEHOLD, A WHITE HORSE; AND HE THAT SAT ON HIM HAD A BOW; AND A CROWN WAS GIVEN UNTO HIM: AND HE WENT FORTH CONQUERING AND TO CONQUER.

We are journeying unto the place, of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel. MOSES.

ELIZABETH TOWN:
PRINTED BY SHEPARD KOLLOCK—1794.

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PREFACE.

IF *the prophetic parts of the oracles of God, from what may be ſtiled "a ſacred Calendar;" or, "an Almanac of Prophecy," it is with the greateſt propriety, that the Watchmen of Zion are diſpoſed, now and then, to conſult this ſacred calendar, in view of determining the watch of the night, and, of conſequence, how long before the arrival of the long-wiſhed-for promiſed day. From promiſes which the ſacred ſcriptures afford, calculations may, with a good degree of preciſion, be made, reſpecting the time of the accompliſhments of the prophecies which relate to the future proſperity of the Zion of God. The redemption of the church of God from the bondage of Papal Babylon, as well as from the general dominion of the Powers of Darkneſs, is a glorious and animating ſubject of prophecy. The Lord hath ſpoken, and the decree ſhall be fulfilled.—If, in ancient time, the people of God believed what the Lord had ſpoken reſpecting the redemption of his people; if, from the ſacred calendar, they diſcovered the time of the promiſed redemption—prayed for, and actually ſaw the fulfilment of the object of their hopes, in temporal and in ſpiritual deliverance, what forbids that, in this day*

of general captivity, the prophets of the Lord should look with the same faith and prayer for the fulfilment of those promises which respect the spiritual deliverance of the Christian Church, both from the bondage of Babylon, and from the thraldom of Satan?—And more especially, as we evidently see marks of the divine progress in this work, in his present judgments among the nations of the earth, and particularly on mystical Babylon; which all allow, are but a little to precede the glorious redemption and prosperity of the Church in the Millennial-day. —" One circumstance, *saith Dr. Hallifax,** ought not to be passed by unnoticed—namely, the menaces of certain vengeance to be hereafter inflicted on the enemies of the true religion, intimated by the destruction of the body of the fourth beast; and *subsequent to that* the promise of the universal establishment of the reign of Christ, when *the stone cut out of the mountain without hands,* shall strike and *break to pieces the image on its feet;* and become a *great mountain, and fill the whole earth.* This part of the prophecies is yet unfulfilled; nor is it for us to ascertain

NOTE.

* Hallifax's Sermon, preached at Bishop Warburton's Lecture, Lincoln's-Inn Chapel, London, page 96, published 1776.

the manner in which so important a revolution, in the religious world, will be effected: The use intended by the observation here is, from the symptoms of decline which are now discernible in the system of the Papal power, to point out to you the presumption that arises in favor of the truth of the prophetical denunciations, and from the concussions which have already shook the tottering throne of superstition, to learn to expect, in God's good time, *its full and final demolition.*"

And if this celebrated Author, in his day, thought there was ground to use the following language, in view of prophecies already fulfilled, and events then existing, with how much more reason may we confidently adopt it now, and say, that, " under the auspices of such a guide we may hope to advance, securely, in our projected work; and to have the pleasure of those, who, after long travelling in a dreary night, perceive, at last, the darkness to diminish, and the reddening streaks of the morning, betokening to them, that the day is at hand?"—

The object in publishing Dr. Bellamy's discourse is to establish the doctrine of the Millennium as to matter of fact: and by publishing President Edwards's " Humble Attempt to

promote explicit Agreement and visible Union in Prayer;" *it is hoped attention will be excited to the use of those means which God hath ordained to be used in view of a gracious fulfilment of* every *promise made to his Church and to his People.* Thus saith the Lord, I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them.

The design of the third and last discourse is to support the objects of the two former, by an appeal to existing facts, to the demonstration of present events. By these it appears, that what Dr. Hallifax termed "the reddening streaks of the morning," *have become entitled to the stile of the* dawn, *if not to the* morning *of the day.—How does our faith grow—our confidence increase, and our joyful hearts exult at the sight, or rather at the sound of the stately steppings of our God in the present revolutions of his providence, fulfilling the purposes of his great decree!—From what we observe to have, already, taken place, may we not confidently anticipate all that is to come?*—The testimony of Jesus, *saith the angel to St. John,* is a spirit of prophecy.—*If, in a spirit of prophecy, the Great Head of the Church hath spoken of things to come, to strengthen the faith, and to cheer the hope of his followers, it can-*

not be denied, but our time and talents are well employed, whilſt, in ſtudy, with meekneſs and prayer, we labor to underſtand and to poſſeſs the bleſſings he hath ſo graciouſly prepared, and ſo abundantly promiſed to his Church.

If, in the day in which Preſident Edwards lived, it was thought time for the Zion of God to go into labor, in view of the approach of the time of promiſed redemption to Iſrael, with how much more courage and confidence may the Church of God now proceed in the arduous, yet noble and intereſting work?

The arguments which his invaluable tract ſuggeſts for explicit Agreement and viſible Union of God's People in extraordinary Prayer, for the Revival of Religion, and the Advancement of Chriſt's Kingdom on Earth, purſuant to Scripture-promiſes and Prophecies, concerning the LAST TIME, *are as applicable to the ſtate of the Church, and of the world, now, as they were then, and the encouragement, from preſent circumſtances, much more animating.*

If any individual Chriſtian, any ſociety of Chriſtian People, or any Miniſter, or aſſociation of Miniſters, ſhould be ſo far impreſſed with the propriety of a preſent compliance with what Preſident Edwards labored to bring about in his day, as to deſire that meaſures ſhould

be taken for the accomplishment of the object of his work, and express a willingness to aid in laying a foundation for a general and united exertion in prayer throughout all the Christian Churches in our land; the Editor pledges his whole heart in aid to any such proposal, and would think himself highly favored by any communications, from any quarter, on the sublime and animating subject.

That the Great Head of the Church would graciously take this humble attempt to the honor of his name, and for the interests of his Zion, under his holy protection, and prosper, and do his own blessed will in all things which it strives to accomplish, is the fervent prayer of one, who knows no higher object of present or future ambition, than to approve himself, and to be approved of his Lord and Master, as an industrious hewer of wood, and drawer of water for the church of God.

DAVID AUSTIN.

ELIZABETH TOWN,
May 1, 1794.

THE

MILLENNIUM.

BY

JOSEPH BELLAMY, A. M.

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL AT BETHLEM.

[*First published at Boston in* 1758.]

REVELATION XX. 1, 2, 3.

And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled.

IN a great variety of respects the Bible is the most remarkable book in the world. In it we have God's moral character clearly exhibited to view, by a history of his conduct, as moral governor of the world, from the beginning; and the nature of fallen man painted to the life, by a history of their behaviour for four thousand years. In it we have opened the glorious and astonishing method that has been entered upon to disappoint all

Satan's designs, by the interposition of the Son of God; and are informed of his birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension and exaltation, and of the glorious designs he has in view. And the whole is so contrived as to be admirably suited to all the circumstances and needs of a good man, that, as it was designed to be the good man's book, in a peculiar sense, so it is perfectly suited to his case. *It is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works.*

That sincere concern for the cause of truth and virtue, for the honor of God and interest of true religion, which is peculiar to a good man, whose character it is to love Christ above father and mother, wife and children, houses and lands, yea, better than his own life, must naturally subject him to a peculiar kind of solicitude; even as a child, of a truly filial spirit, is pained when it goes ill with his father's family, to whose interest he is closely attached, and has a whole system of inward sensations that a stranger intermeddles not with. The Bible, the good man's book, is, therefore, wisely adapted to ease the good man's pained heart, and af-

ford conſolation in this intereſting and moſt important point, as it gives the ſtrongeſt aſſurances that the cauſe of virtue ſhall finally prevail.

How inſupportable muſt the grief of the pious Jews have been, ſitting on the ſides of the rivers of Babylon? *There we ſat down*, ſay they, *yea, we wept when we remembered Zion.* And on the willows they hung their harps, nor could any thing divert their minds. *If I forget thee, O Jeruſalem, let my right hand forget her cunning! If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!* —How inſupportable, I ſay, muſt their grief have been, while their glorious holy temple, and their holy city, the place of all their ſacred ſolemnities, were lying deſolate, and God's people in captivity, had it not been for that promiſe, ſo often repeated, that after ſeventy years God would viſit them, and cauſe them to return to their own land. God knew before-hand the anguiſh which would be apt to fill their hearts, the ſinking diſcouragements, and all the train of dark and gloomy thoughts they would be incident to, and before-hand provided a remedy. Yea, no ſooner had he denounced their doom in the xxxixth chapter of Iſaiah, but immediately

in the next chapter, and for ten or twenty chapters together, does he provide for their ſupport. *Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people; ſpeak comfortably to Jeruſalem,* &c. &c.

So, how inſupportable would have been the grief of the church of Chriſt, through the long, dark, cruel reign of myſtical Babylon, while they beheld error and wickedneſs univerſally prevail, Satan getting his will in almoſt every thing, and, to appearance, no ſigns of better times, but all things wearing a dreadful aſpect before their eyes:—How great their grief? How ſinking their diſcouragements? How almoſt inſuperable their temptations to apoſtatize, and forſake a cauſe that heaven ſeemed to forſake, had not the day of deliverance been expreſsly foretold, and the glory that ſhould follow opened to view by the ſpirit of propheſy? But in a firm belief that the cauſe they were engaged in, and for which they ſpilt their blood, would finally prevail, and prevail in this world, where they then beheld Satan reigning and triumphing; I ſay, in a firm belief of this, the whole army of martyrs could march on to battle courageouſly, willing to ſacrifice their lives in the cauſe, not doubting of final victory, although they themſelves muſt fall in the field.

Indeed, were the salvation of his own soul the only thing the good man had in view, he would naturally be quite easy upon a full assurance that this was secured. So, had Moses cared for nothing but the welfare of himself and of his posterity, he might have been satisfied, while the whole congregation of Israel were destroyed, if he might become a great nation, and that without any solicitude for the honor of the great name of the God of Israel; yea, although the idolatrous nations round about were fully established in the belief of the divinity of their idols, and brought to look upon the God of the Hebrews with ever so great contempt by the means. But, attached as he was to the honor of the God of Israel, nothing could give him satisfaction, but a prospect that that would be secured. The welfare of himself and of his family was of no importance in his esteem, compared with this. *See Exod.* xxxii.

It must, therefore, be remembered, that, as the Son of God left his father's bosom, and the realms of light and glory, and expired on the cross in the utmost visible contempt, that he might spoil principalities and powers, bruise the serpent's head, destroy the works of the Devil, so his true disciples have

imbibed a meaſure of the ſame ſpirit, and, as volunteers enliſted under his banner, have the ſame thing in view; they long for the deſtruction of Satan's kingdom, and theſe petitions are the genuine language of their hearts; "Our Father which art in heaven, "hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, "thy will be done on earth as it is in hea- "ven." Nor can the ſalvation of their own ſouls, although ever ſo ſafely ſecured, ſatisfy their minds, without a clear view and fair proſpect of Chriſt's final victory over all his enemies: "But if our great GENERAL, who "has ſacrificed his life in the cauſe, may but "at laſt obtain a complete victory, notwith- "ſtanding all the preſent dark appearances, "this is enough," ſays the Chriſtian Soldier; "I am willing to riſque all in his ſervice, and "die in the battle too. But if Satan were "always to carry the day, Oh, who could "live under the thought!"

This having been the temper of good men, more or leſs, even from the early ages of the world, and through all ſucceſſive generations to this day, they have evidently wanted a peculiar ſupport, which the reſt of mankind ſtood in no need of, to carry them

comfortably through such a long scene of darkness; wickedness prevailing, God dishonored, Satan triumping, the world perishing, the true church of God more generally in sackcloth. And accordingly the final victory of the cause of truth and virtue was intimated in the very first promise made to fallen man; and, from time to time, God repeated this comfortable prediction to his church and people; and finally made it the chief subject of the last book of holy Scripture he ordered to be wrote for the use of his church.

Now let us take a brief view of the whole series of these divine predictions, from the beginning of the world, even down to this in our text, contained in one of the last chapters in the Bible, that we may see what full evidence there is of this truth, and so what abundant cause for consolation to all the people of God.

1. Immediately after the fall, when the serpent, even the Old Serpent the Devil, had just seduced mankind to revolt from God; and had, to all appearance, laid this whole world in perpetual ruin, even in the depths of this midnight darkness, a ray of light

ſhone down from heaven—*The ſeed of the woman ſhall bruiſe the ſerpent's head.* As if God had ſaid, "I ſee the ſcheme that Satan "has laid to ruin the world, and eſtabliſh his "impious, malicious cauſe: I ſee it, and "am determined to defeat it. The feebler "woman he has over-matched, but her al-"mighty ſeed ſhall conquer him, and as ef-"fectually ſubdue him, and prevent all fu-"ture miſchief by him, as a ſerpent is ſub-"dued and incapacitated for further miſ-"chief when his head is cruſhed to pieces, "under the indignant heel of one determin-"ed on his death." This was a complete doom, indeed, denounced againſt Satan, at the head of the kingdom of darkneſs. And it fully implied, that the cauſe of light, truth and righteouſneſs, ſhould finally obtain a complete victory.

2. After this gracious and glorious promiſe had been the chief foundation of all the hopes of God's people for two thouſand years, God was pleaſed to point out the particular family from whence this mighty deliverer ſhould ſpring, and to intimate what a univerſal bleſſing he ſhould be to all the nations of the earth. *And in thy* SEED *ſhall* ALL *the families of the earth be bleſſed,* ſaid

God to Abraham; which again plainly ſuppoſed, that the cauſe of truth and righteouſneſs, notwithſtanding the dark ſtate the world then was in, all ſinking faſt into idolatry, and would for many ages be in, buried in heatheniſh darkneſs, ſhould yet, in due time, univerſally prevail over the whole earth. For *in thy* SEED *ſhall* ALL *the families of the earth be bleſſed.* This ſame promiſe was repeated again and again to Abraham, and afterwards to Iſaac and to Jacob.

3. Hitherto God had ſupported his peoples' hopes chiefly with promiſes, with verbal predictions; but from the days of Moſes to the days of Solomon king of Iſrael, to aſſiſt his peoples' faith, God did, beſides repeated promiſes of the ſame thing, by a great variety of wonderful works, ſhadow forth the glorious day; and, at the ſame time, ſhew that he had ſufficient wiſdom and power to accompliſh the greateſt deſigns. That his people might be convinced that he could eaſily bring to paſs, for the good of his church, whatſoever ſeemed good in his ſight.

Iſrael, in the Egyptian bondage, were a deſigned type of a fallen world, under the dominion and tyranny of Satan; nor was

Pharaoh more loth to let Iſrael go, than Satan is to have his ſubjects deſert him, and his kingdom go to ruin; but notwithſtanding all the ſeeming impoſſibilities in the way of Iſrael's deliverance, infinite wiſdom knew how to accompliſh the divine deſigns. God could even cauſe a member of Pharaoh's family to educate one to be an inſtrument of this deſigned deliverance. And, in due time, behold all the armies of Iſrael march forth from the land of Egypt, out of the houſe of bondage; and Pharaoh, and his chariots, and all his hoſt, lie buried in the Red Sea! So eaſily can God bring forth his people, even out of the anti-chriſtian kingdom, which is ſpiritually called Sodom and Egypt; and, if he pleaſes, raiſe up the inſtruments of this glorious work, even in the court of Rome.

And when the name of the true God was almoſt forgotten through all the earth, and the Devil worſhipped in his room, in idols of various names, through all the nations, God knew how to make his name known, and to cauſe his fame to ſpread abroad, and fill the whole earth with his glory, by wonders wrought in the land of Ham; by deſcending on Mount Sinai; by leading the

armies of Iſrael forty years in the wilderneſs, in a pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night, giving them bread from heaven and water out of the flinty rock; dividing Jordan; delivering up one and thirty idolatrous kings to the ſword of Joſhua; raiſing up judges, one after another, in a miraculous manner, to deliver his people, until the days of David and Solomon, types of Chriſt.—Of David who, Meſſiah-like, ſubdued the enemies of Iſrael all around; of Solomon, who built the Holy Temple, and filled Jeruſalem with riches and glory.—He who hath done all theſe things, can eaſily accompliſh all the deſigns of his heart, preſerve his church, raiſe up deliverance, break to pieces the kingdoms of the earth for her ſake, make truth victorious, and ſet up the New-Jeruſalem in all her ſpiritual glory, build up his church as a glorious Holy Temple, and ſet the Son of David upon the Throne; by whoſe hands Satan, and all the powers of darkneſs, ſhall be ſubdued, chained, ſealed up in the bottomleſs pit, as much afraid, and as much unable, to attempt any miſchief, as the ſubdued nations around Iſrael were in the very height of David's power.

But when ſhall the Son of David reign,

and the church have reſt? When ſhall the cauſe of truth and righteouſneſs thus prevail? Perhaps the very time was deſigned to be ſhadowed forth in the law of Moſes, in the inſtitution of their holy days. The *ſeventh day*, ſaid God, who always had this glorious ſeaſon of reſt in view—"*The ſeventh day ſhall be a Sabbath of Reſt, the ſeventh month ſhall be full of holy days, the ſeventh year ſhall be a year of reſt.*"—So, perhaps, after ſix thouſand years are ſpent in labour and ſorrow by the church of God, the ſeven thouſandth ſhall be a ſeaſon of ſpiritual reſt and joy, an holy ſabbath to the Lord.—And as God the Creator was ſix days in forming a confuſed chaos into a beautiful world, and reſted the ſeventh; ſo God the Redeemer, after ſix thouſand years labour in the work of the new creation, may reſt on the ſeventh, and then proclaim a general liberty to an enſlaved world, and grant a general pardon to a guilty race; as in the year of jubilee, among the Jews, every enſlaved Jew was ſet at liberty, and the debts of all the indebted were cancelled.

4. Theſe things, thus ſhadowed forth in types, were alſo expreſly declared by the mouths of the ancient prophets, from the

days of David and forward, to the end of that dispensation; and the same things are hinted here and there in the New-Testament, and largely opened to view in the Revelation of St. John. So that both the Old and New Testaments join to raise in us, who live in these ages, the highest assurance that it is God's design to *give his Son the Heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. For all kings shall bow down before him, and all nations shall serve him. And the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. They shall beat their swords into plough-shears and their spears into pruning-hooks, and learn war no more. For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. A nation shall be born in a day. All thy people shall be righteous. They shall all know the Lord, from the least to the greatest. And holiness to the Lord shall be written on every thing. Kings shall become nursing fathers, and queens nursing mothers; and there shall be nothing to hurt or offend. The inhabitants shall not* [so much as] *say I am sick. And this kingdom shall fill the whole*

*earth. And all nations and languages shall serve him. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High God; and the Jews shall be called in, and the fulness of the Gentiles. For the Gospel shall be preached to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. And Satan shall be bound, and Christ shall reign on earth a thousand years.** And as surely as the Jews were delivered out of the Babylonish captivity, and Babylon itself destroyed, even so surely shall all these things be accomplished in their time; and mysti-

NOTE.

* *Satan shall be bound*, &c. "The church of Christ shall enjoy purity of religion in peace, without any disturbance from those old enemies of mankind, working in the children of disobedience." *Daubuz on the Place.*

"And this seems to imply, that all shall be converted—However, if there be any that remain unconverted, they will, during the imprisonment of Satan, be in so small a number, and so feeble in comparison of the true Christians, that they shall neither dare, nor be able to disturb the peace of Christ's kingdom."

Lowman on the Place.

A spirit of strict piety shall rise so high, and so universally prevail, that it shall be as though all the martyrs of former ages were risen from the dead, and appeared upon the stage all at once. This seems to be the sense of those words in *Rev.* xx. 4. The martyrs are said to rise from the dead and reign with Christ a thousand years, much in the same sense as *John* the *Baptist* is called *Elias*, viz. because he was a man so nearly resembling that celebrated prophet. *See Lowman on the Place.*

cal Babylon ſhall *ſink as a millſtone into the ſea, and ſhall be found no more at all.*

5. But when ſhall theſe things be? I anſwer, in the firſt place, it is plain, as yet they have not been; theſe great things have not been accompliſhed. They were not accompliſhed when the Jews were brought out of their Babyloniſh captivity; for, from thence to the coming of Chriſt, they never were in ſo flouriſhing a ſtate as they had been before. They were not accompliſhed in the apoſtolic age; for St. John, when moſt, if not all, of the other apoſtles were dead, ſpake of theſe things, in the Revelation, as yet to come to paſs. They were not accompliſhed in the three firſt centuries, for that was almoſt one continued ſcene of blood. They were not accompliſhed in the days of Conſtantine the Great; for it is ſince then that *the Man of Sin has been revealed.* Nor are they accompliſhed to this day; for Satan is ſtill walking to and fro through the earth, and going up and down therein: Babylon is not fallen; the Jews are not called, nor is the fulneſs of the Gentiles come in, but the greateſt part of the earth, to this day, ſit in heatheniſh darkneſs.

When then ſhall they be accompliſhed? Not till *the holy city has been trodden under foot forty and two months.* Not till *the witneſſes have propheſied a thouſand two hundred and threeſcore days, cloathed in ſackcloth.* And not till *the woman has been in the wilderneſs a time, and times, and half a time.* Now a time, and times, and half a time, *i. e.* three years and a half is equal to forty-two months, which is equal to one thouſand two hundred and ſixty days, which doubtleſs means one thouſand two hundred and ſixty years, a day for a year; as the event has proved, was the caſe in the prophecy of Daniel, who declared it to be ſeventy weeks, from the going forth of the commandment to build Jeruſalem to the death of Chriſt; for it proved to be four hundred and ninety years, which is ſeven times ſeventy, a day for a year. *Dan.* ix. 24.

So that there is no difficulty in determining the downfall of Antichriſt, but what ariſes from the uncertainty we are at when to date the beginning of his riſe and reign.—The Biſhops of Rome were ſome hundred years riſing gradually from the honeſt character of a ſcripture-biſhop to the grand title of UNIVERSAL POPE, which was obtained,

A. D. six hundred and six. And it was a long time from this before they got to the height of their grandeur, and the Pope was constituted a TEMPORAL PRINCE, which was not till A. D. seven hundred and fifty-six.* And perhaps he may fall as gradually as he rose. And as now he has been falling two hundred and forty years, even ever since the beginning of the REFORMATION, so we may rationally expect he will continue to fall till BABYLON sinks AS A MILL-STONE INTO THE SEA. And then *the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.* And all the hosts of heaven, as loud as thunder, shall say, *Hallelujah! For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.*

And thus we have taken a brief view of the scripture-evidence, that the cause of truth and righteousness will finally become gloriously victorious.

6. Nor is there the least reason to doubt the accomplishment of these things; for God

NOTE.

* See Bower's History of the Popes.

in all times paſt has been faithful to his word, and is evidently ſufficiently engaged in this affair—knows how, and can eaſily accompliſh it, and it will be much to the honor of his great name to do it.

God has been faithful to his promiſes to his church from the beginning of the world. To all human appearance, it was a very unlikely thing that the Hebrews, enſlaved in Egypt, under Pharaoh, a very powerful monarch, and ſunk down into idolatry, and very low-ſpirited, ſhould ariſe and go forth with all their flocks and herds, and march through the wilderneſs, and conquer the ſeven nations of Canaan, and poſſeſs their land. And ſo it was, to all human appearance, equally unlikely, that the Jews in Babylon ſhould ever return to their own land. —But God had promiſed in both caſes, and God performed. And an event more ſurpriſing than either of theſe, yea, the moſt aſtoniſhing that could have happened, has alſo come to paſs, juſt as God had ſaid.—The promiſed SEED has been born, and the ſerpent has *bruiſed his heel;* and methinks now not only God's faithfulneſs, but even the nature of the caſe itſelf, ſhould lead us to believe, that *the* SEED *ſhall bruiſe his heel.*

For after God has appeared to be ſo *infinitely engaged* to deſtroy the works of the Devil, as to give his only begotten Son, it can ſurely never once be imagined that he wants ſufficient reſolution to carry him thro' what yet remains to be done.

And he who could ſend Pharaoh's daughter to take up Moſes, when an infant, out of his baſket of bulruſhes, and educate him in Pharaoh's court, that he might be ſkilled in all the arts of government; and when he had ſpent forty years in this ſituation baniſh him into the land of Midian, that in the ſolitary life of a ſhepherd for another forty years, he might attain to the meekeſt man on earth, that he might, by both, be thoroughly qualified for the work deſigned him; and he, who could take David from feeding his father's ſheep, and, after a courſe of trials, ſo exceeding neceſſary to prepare frail man for high honors and great uſefulneſs, exalt him to the throne of Iſrael, ſo thoroughly furniſhed to head their armies and ſubdue their foes, advance their external grandeur, and put great honor upon their religion; and he, who could take Daniel, one of the Jewiſh captives in Babylon, and raiſe him to ſuch high honor and great

authority, to be a father to his people thro' their ſeventy years captivity, and by his means, perhaps, influence Cyrus ſo generouſly to releaſe them, and aſſiſt them in their return;* and finally, he, who could take a number of poor illiterate fiſhermen, and the perſecuting Saul, and by them lay the foundation of the Chriſtian church, in ſpite of the united oppoſition of earth and hell; and after their death cauſe the Chriſtian church to live through, yea, at laſt to triumph over the ten bloody perſecutions, and even conquer the Roman empire; and that which is ſtill more wonderful, to ſubſiſt to this day, notwithſtanding all the ſubtle and cruel methods which have, for ſo many hundred years, been taken by Antichriſt to

NOTE.

* As Daniel underſtood the prophecies of Jeremiah, which had determined the time of the captivity to be ſeventy years, *Dan.* ix. 2. and had his heart ſo much in the affair of their return, as to *ſet his face to ſeek the Lord by faſting and prayer*, verſe 3; and being the chief man in the kingdom, muſt have free acceſs to Cyrus, *Dan.* vi. ſo nothing could be more natural than to ſhew him an ancient Jewiſh prophecy, wherein he was mentioned by name, near two hundred years ago, and pointed out as the perſon who was to let go the Jewiſh captives, build Jeruſalem, and lay the foundation of the temple. *Iſaiah* xliv. 28. and chap. xlv. 1—3. To which Cyrus no doubt refers in his proclamation. *Ezra* i. 2, 3, 4. *Thus ſaith Cyrus king of Perſia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he hath* CHARGED *me to build him an houſe at Jeruſalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you*, &c.

extirpate Chriſtianity out of the world; I ſay, he who could do theſe things, cannot be at a loſs for means, or want power to effect the glorious things foretold, which yet remain to be accompliſhed.

And what if mankind are ever ſo eſtranged from God? And what if they are ever ſo averſe to a reconciliation? And what if Satan reigns in the courts of princes, in the councils of the clergy, as well as in the cottages of the poor? And what if even the whole world in a manner lies in wickedneſs? So that a general conflagration might rather be expected, as it is ſo eminently deſerved—are theſe things any bar in the way?

What if mankind have abuſed divine grace from the beginning of the world? What if they have murdered his prophets, his Son, and his apoſtles? What if they have reſiſted and grieved the Holy Spirit, and perverted the doctrines, and gone counter to the precepts of his holy word? Yea, what if it appears that mankind are really on Satan's ſide? And this, after all the kind methods God has taken to reclaim a guilty world, ſo that even the beſt man on earth, or the kindeſt angel in heaven might be diſcouraged, totally and finally diſcouraged, and think it

never worth while to take any more pains with such a perverse race, but that it were more suitable to the rules of good government to resign them to destruction!—Are any, or all these things together, a sufficient bar to the accomplishment of God's designs, whose goodness is absolutely infinite? Can they be so, after the Son of God has been offered as a sacrifice of atonement, to secure the honour of the divine government, and open a way for the honourable exercise of his grace?—What! after the Messiah has been exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins?—And after all power and authority in heaven and earth is given into his hands, on purpose to destroy the kingdom of Satan, and bring every nation, kindred and tongue, to bow the knee to God! Yea, when the infinitely wise Governor of the world has before determined to permit the wickedness of mankind to come out and stand in so glaring a light, and to suffer Satan so long to practise and prosper, to this very purpose, that his power, wisdom and grace, might be the more effectually and the more gloriously displayed, in the accomplishment of all his glorious designs?

Inſtead of being diſcouraged, from a view of the paſt, or the preſent ſtate of the world, as without the light of divine revelation we ſhould naturally have been, methinks now, viewing all things in the light of holy ſcripture, it muſt be perfectly rational to conclude, that all theſe things are only preparatory, as an introduction to the glorious day: even, as all the cruel bondage of Iſrael in Egypt, and all the haughty conduct of Pharaoh, were but preparatory as an introduction to the glorious event that God had then in his eye. And what unſpeakable honour will redound to God moſt High, if after all the vile conduct of this apoſtate world, and notwithſtanding all their ill-deſert; and after all the ſubtle methods Satan has taken to make his kingdom ſtrong; I ſay, what unſpeakable honour will redound to God moſt High, if, after all this, he ſhould accompliſh his glorious deſigns? And when things have been ripening theſe five or ſix thouſand years, and are now ſo nearly every way prepared for God, to get himſelf a great name in the total deſtruction of Satan's kingdom, can we once imagine, that God will let the opportunity ſlip? Or rather, ought

we not firmly to believe, that when every thing is quite ripe, then God will ariſe, make bare his arm, and fill the whole world with his glory?

Eſpecially, conſidering that, as things ſtand, the honour of all his glorious perfections lies at ſtake; for ever ſince the Almighty gave out the word, that *the* SEED *of the woman ſhould bruiſe the ſerpent's head*, even from that very day, that Old Serpent, with all his ſubtilty, has employed his whole power to defeat the divine deſigns, maintain his kingdom in the world, and eſcape the dreadful blow. He ſtirred up Cain to kill his brother, and never ceaſed till the whole earth was filled with violence, which brought on the general deluge; and after the flood, he was induſtrious to divert mankind from the knowledge and worſhip of the true God, and to eſtabliſh idolatry and the worſhip of the Devil, in all the kingdoms of the earth; and ſince Chriſtianity appeared, he has turned himſelf into every ſhape to defeat the gracious deſigns of the goſpel, and has prevailed and reigned above a thouſand years, at the head of the grand antichriſtian apoſtacy; and ſhould the Al-

mighty ſuffer him to go on and proſper, and finally prevail, what would become of his own great name? and how great would be their triumph in the infernal regions, to think that in ſpite of God and of his Son, from the beginning to the end of the world, they have held out in a conſtant war, kept the field, and at laſt come off victorious?—Wherefore, as when God repeats the wonderful works which he had done for Iſrael in the days of old, in the xxth chapter of Ezekiel, he conſtantly ſays, *I wrought for mine own great name.* So here, in this caſe, will he do it again, and that in the moſt eminent manner; as it is written, *The zeal of the Lord of Hoſts will perform this.*

So that, in a word, if almighty power and infinite wiſdom, at the head of the univerſe, infinitely engaged, are a ſufficient match for the guilty, impotent powers of darkneſs, then we may depend upon it, Satan will meet with an overthrow, as notable as did Pharaoh and his hoſt in the Red Sea;—and as proud Babylon, once the miſtreſs of kingdoms, is now no more, ſo myſtical Babylon ſhall ſink as a millſtone in the ſea, and riſe no more for ever. And,

7. Whatever miſtakes the Jewiſh Rabbies might fall into, in their interpretation of Daniel's ſeventy weeks, and in their attempts to fix the preciſe time of the Meſſiah's coming; and whatever miſtaken notions any of them had about the nature of his kingdom, as though it was to be of this world, and he to appear in all earthly grandeur; and although his coming, to ſome, might ſeem to be ſo long delayed, that they began to give up all hopes of it, and to contrive ſome other meaning to all the ancient prophecies, or even to call in queſtion the inſpiration of the prophets; yet neither the miſtakes of ſome, nor the infidelity of others, at all altered the caſe. Days, and months, and years haſtened along, and one revolution among the kingdoms of the earth followed upon another, *till the fulneſs of time was come*, till all things were ripe, and then, behold, the Meſſiah was born. Even ſo it ſhall be now.

Whatever miſtakes Chriſtian Divines may fall into, in their interpretation of ſix hundred and ſixty-ſix, the number of the beaſt; or in their endeavours to fix the preciſe time when the one thouſand two hundred and ſixty years of Antichriſt's reign

ſhall begin and end; or whatever wrong notions ſome have had, or may have about the nature of the Millennium, as though Chriſt was to reign perſonally on earth; and if ſome, mean while, begin to think, that all things will go on as they have done, and to conclude, that the expectation of theſe glorious days, which has prevailed in the Chriſtian Church from the beginning, is merely a groundleſs fancy: Yet none of theſe things will at all alter the caſe. Days, and months, and years will haſten along, and one revolution, among the kingdoms of the earth, follow upon another, until the fulneſs of time is come—till all things are ripe for the event; and then the miniſters of Chriſt will accompliſh in reality, what St. John ſaw in his viſions:—*I ſaw an angel fly in the midſt of heaven, having the everlaſting goſpel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue and people.* And then ſhall it come to paſs that the veil of ignorance, which hath ſo long ſpread over all nations, ſhall be deſtroyed: and knowledge ſhall ſo greatly increaſe, that it ſhall be as though the *light of the moon* were *as the light of the ſun, and the light of the ſun ſevenfold;* until *the knowledge of*

the Lord cover the earth as the waters do the sea; and then there *shall be nothing to hurt or offend in all God's holy mountain;* for Babylon shall fall, Satan be bound, and Christ will reign, and truth and righteousness universally prevail a thousand years.

REMARKS AND INFERENCES.

1. When, therefore, our Saviour, in the days of his flesh, denominated his followers *a little flock*, from the smallness of their number, he had no design to teach us that this would always be the case; for although it was very true, that his flock was at that time *a little flock*, yet the day was coming, when that *little leaven* should *leaven the whole lump*, and *the stone cut out without hands* should become *a great mountain, and fill the whole earth.* So, although it was a saying very applicable, not only to our Saviour's day, but to most other periods of the church, that *many are called, and few are chosen;* yet it does not hence follow, that this will be the case, when *a nation shall be born in a day*, and *all the people shall be righteous.*—And although it has commonly been so, that of the MANY who have sought *to enter in at*

the ſtrait gate, but FEW *have been able*, and the GENERALITY have, from age to age, gone *in the broad way, which leads down to deſtruction;* yet it ſhall be quite otherwiſe, when *Satan is bound, that he may deceive the nations no more;* and when *all ſhall know the Lord, from the leaſt to the greateſt*, when *the kingdom, and the greatneſs of the kingdom, under the whole heavens, ſhall be given to the people of the ſaints of the Moſt High.* For it is very plain, that theſe, and ſuch like expreſſions uſed by our Saviour, which were applicable to the then times, and to moſt other periods, when the number of true converts hath been comparatively very ſmall, were never deſigned to be applicable to that glorious period yet to come, which is to be the grand harveſt time, when *the Jews*, who are, to this day, for that very purpoſe, no doubt, by divine Providence, preſerved a diſtinct people, and *the fulneſs of the Gentiles ſhall come in.* Nor can it be right to interpret ſuch expreſſions in ſuch a ſenſe, as to render them inconſiſtent with what the ſcriptures ſo plainly teach ſhall be the caſe in the latter days: Therefore,

2. Notwithſtanding hitherto but few have

been ſaved, there is no evidence but that yet the greater part of mankind may be ſaved. Nothing can be argued againſt this from ſuch expreſſions as have been juſt mentioned, for the reaſon already ſuggeſted. Nor can any thing be argued from any other paſſages of ſcripture; for the ſcripture no where teaches, that the greateſt part of the whole human race will finally periſh. I am ſenſible, many ſeem to take this for granted, and they are greatly ſtrengthened in this belief from a view of the awful ſtate mankind have been in from the beginning of the world to this day. But if we ſhould even grant, that hitherto not one in ten thouſand have been ſaved, yet it may come to paſs, (there may be time enough for it, and men enough yet born;) I ſay, it may yet come to paſs, that by far the greateſt part of mankind may be ſaved.

For as the ſcriptures conſtantly teach that, in theſe glorious days, univerſal peace ſhall prevail, and inſtead of war the nations ſhall employ their time in uſeful labour, *ſhall beat their ſwords into plow ſhares, and their ſpears into pruning hooks;* ſo it will naturally come to paſs, that mankind, who are now in vaſt

multitudes deſtroyed in the wars from one generation to another, will be greatly increaſed in numbers, and plentifully provided for. Only remove wars, famines, and all thoſe deſolating judgments, which the ſins of mankind have, from age to age, brought down on a guilty world, and let that univerſal peace and proſperity take place, which indeed will naturally reſult from the ſincere practice of pure Chriſtianity, and mankind will naturally increaſe and ſpread, and fill all the earth. And while every one improves his time well, and is diligent in his calling, according to the rules of our holy religion, and all luxury, intemperance and extravagance are baniſhed from the nations of the earth, it is certain that this globe will be able to ſuſtain with food and raiment a number of inhabitants, immenſely greater than ever yet dwelt on it at a time. And now if *all* theſe ſhall *know the Lord from the leaſt to the greateſt*, as the ſcripture aſſerts, ſo that *the knowledge of the Lord ſhall fill the earth as the waters cover the ſea*, for a thouſand years together, it may eaſily, yea, it will naturally come to paſs, that there will be more ſaved in theſe thouſand years, than ever before dwelt upon the face of the earth from the foundation of the world.

Some indeed underſtand the thouſand years in the Revelation, agreeable to other prophetical numbers in that book, a day for a year; ſo *the time, and times, and half a time*, i. e. three years and an half, and the *forty two months*, and the *one thouſand two hundred and ſixty days* are no doubt to be reckoned; and if the dark period is to be reckoned by this rule, it ſhould ſeem that the light period ſhould likewiſe; for otherwiſe the dark period, which in that book is repreſented to be the ſhorteſt, will indeed be the longeſt—the one thouſand two hundred and ſixty days longer than the thouſand years; and if the thouſand years is reckoned a day for a year, as the ſcripture-year contains three hundred and ſixty days, ſo the one thouſand years will amount to three hundred and ſixty thouſand years; in which there might be millions ſaved to one that has been loſt. But not to inſiſt upon this, if this glorious period is to laſt only a thouſand years literally, there may be many more ſaved than loſt.

If it be granted, that it is difficult to compute with any exactneſs in ſuch a caſe as this, yet it is eaſy to make ſuch a computation as may ſatisfy us in the point before us;

for in Egypt the Hebrews doubled at the rate of about once in fourteen years; in New-England the inhabitants double in less than twenty-five years; it will be moderate, therefore, to suppose mankind, in the Millennium, when all the earth is full of peace and prosperity, will double every fifty years. But at this rate, there will be time enough in a thousand years to double twenty times, which would produce such a multitude of people, as that although we should suppose all who live before the Millennium begins to be lost, yet if all these should be saved, there would be above seventeen thousand saved to one that would be lost; as may appear from the table below.

E

1	- - -	2	12 - -	4,096
2	- - -	4	13 - -	8,192
3	- - -	8	14 - -	16,384
4	- - -	16	15 - -	32,768
5	- - -	32	16 - -	65,536
6	- - -	64	17 - -	131,072
7	- - -	128	18 - -	262,144
8	- - -	258	19 - -	524,288
9	- - -	512	20 - -	1,048,576
10	- -	1,024		
11	- -	2,048	Sum total	2,097,150

In the first column, we have the twenty periods, which one thousand years will make at fifty years to a period. In the second column, we see in what proportion mankind will increase, if they are supposed to double in every fifty years. At the end of the first fifty years there will be two for one, and so on. At the end of the twentieth period there will be above a million for one. Now sup-

3. The periods paſt, that have been ſo dark, ought to be conſidered as introductory to this bright and glorious ſcene, and in various reſpects as preparatory thereto.

An apoſtate race, who had joined with the fallen angels in a courſe of rebellion againſt the Governor of the Univerſe, might juſtly have been forſaken of God, and given up to a ſtate of perfect darkneſs and wo, from generation to generation, entirely un-

poſe the world to ſtand ſix thouſand years before the Millennium, and ſuppoſe it in every age to be as full of inhabitants as it will be when the Millennium begins. And ſuppoſe, through all the ſix thouſand years, all the inhabitants of the earth to have died off, and new ones come in their room, at the rate of once in fifty years, ſix thouſand years, at fifty years to a period, will be one hundred and twenty periods—one hundred and twenty worlds full, all loſt; ſuppoſe, yet by the table we ſee, that the ſeventh period alone, which is one hundred and twenty-eight, would more than counter-balance the whole—

Suppoſe all before the Millennium loſt = 120
Suppoſe all in the Millennuim ſaved = 2,097,150
Then 120 : 2,097,150 : : 1 : 17,456 $\frac{40}{120}$ Q. E. D.

That is, above ſeventeen thouſand would be ſaved to one loſt, which was the point to be proved; therefore nothing hinders but that the greateſt part of mankind may yet be ſaved if God ſo pleaſes. There is time enough for it, and may be men enough yet born; and if theſe calculations may ſerve to clear up this, they anſwer the propoſed end. What proportion of mankind will finally be ſaved, and what loſt, no one can tell—it is no where revealed; God was not obliged to ſave one out of all this guilty loſt world. Hitherto the generality may have periſhed, and the Lord is righteous; but who can tell to what a degree God may yet glorify his grace? The holy ſcriptures encourage us to look for things exceeding great and glorious; even for ſuch events as may put a new face on all God's paſt diſpenſations.

der the power of the Prince of Darkneſs.—What has happened in dark ages paſt, may help us a little to realize what might juſtly always have been the woful ſtate of a fallen world. We have had a ſpecimen of the dreadful nature and tendency of Satan's government in all the idolatry, wickedneſs and wo which have filled the world; and we have ſeen a little what is in the heart of fallen man, who have ſlain the Lord's prophets, crucified his Son, and ſhed the blood of thouſands, yea, of millions of his ſervants. And what has happened may help us to realize a little what muſt have been the ſtate of a fallen world, if grace had never interpoſed. At the ſame time it hath appeared, after the beſt contrived experiments have been ſufficiently tried, that it is not in the heart of fallen man to repent, nor can he be brought to it by any external means whatſoever, whereby the abſolute neceſſity of the interpoſition of ſupernatural grace hath been ſet in the moſt glaring light. And now, if after all, God ſhould effectually interpoſe, deſtroy the influence of Satan, ſcatter the darkneſs which fills the world, recover mankind to God, and cauſe truth and righteouſneſs at laſt to prevail, it would ap-

pear to be altogether of God, of his own mere ſelf-moving goodneſs and ſovereign grace. And after ſo long and ſore a bondage mankind will be the more ſenſible of the greatneſs of the deliverance. Nor can it ever be ſaid by a proud and haughty world, "We did not need the influences of divine "grace to bring us right;" whereas all other methods had been ſufficiently tried, and tried in vain. But God may juſtly ſay, "What "could have been done more to reclaim "mankind that I have not done? And to "what purpoſe would it have been to have "taken one ſtep further? I tried them e-"nough—there was no hope—their heart "was a heart of ſtone; therefore, behold I, "even I, will take away the heart of ſtone, "and give an heart of fleſh; and an apoſtate "world ſhall be aſhamed and confounded, "and ſhall never open their mouth when I "ſhall do all theſe things for them."

We are apt to wonder why theſe glorious days ſhould be ſo long delayed, if God, indeed, intends ſuch mercy to men; but God, infinitely wiſe, knows what is beſt—knows how to conduct the affairs of the univerſe—knows when is the fitteſt time to introduce this glorious ſtate of things—knows when

matters will be all ripened, and every thing in the moral world prepared, ſo that this glorious day may be uſhered in to the beſt advantage, in a manner moſt ſuited to honor God and his Son, to humble a haughty world, and to diſappoint Satan moſt grievouſly, after all his wily ſchemes, great ſucceſs, and high expectations; I ſay, God knows when this will be; and this is the very time he has fixed upon for this glorious work.

4. It therefore becomes all the followers of Chriſt, in their ſeveral ſpheres, under firm belief of theſe things, to be of good courage, and exert themſelves to the utmoſt, in the uſe of all proper means, to ſuppreſs error and vice of every kind, and promote the cauſe of truth and righteouſneſs in the world, and ſo be workers together with God.

If one ſtood at the head of this glorious army, which has been in the wars above theſe five thouſand years, and has lived thro' many a dreadful campaign, and were allowed to make a ſpeech to theſe veteran troops upon this glorious theme, he might lift up his voice, and ſay—"Hail, noble heroes! "Brave followers of the Lamb! Your Ge- "neral has ſacrificed his life in this glorious

" cauſe, and ſpoiled principalities and pow-
" ers on the croſs, and now he lives and
" reigns! He reigns on high, with all power
" in heaven and earth in his hands! Your
" predeceſſors, the prophets, apoſtles and
" martyrs, with undaunted courage, have
" marched into the field of battle, and con-
" quered dying, and now reign in heaven!
" Behold, ye are riſen up in their room, are
" engaged in the ſame cauſe, and the time
" of the laſt general battle draws on, when
" a glorious victory is to be won. And al-
" though many a valiant ſoldier may be ſlain
" in the field, yet the army ſhall drive all
" before them at laſt; and Satan being con-
" quered, and all the powers of darkneſs
" driven out of the field, and confined to
" the bottomleſs pit, ye ſhall reign with Chriſt
" a thouſand years—reign in love and peace,
" while truth and righteouſneſs ride triumph-
" ant through the earth; wherefore lay aſide
" every weight, and, with your hearts whol-
" ly intent on this grand affair, gird up your
" loins, and with all the ſpiritual weapons of
" faith, prayer, meditation, watchfulneſs, &c.
" with redoubled zeal and courage, fall on
" your ſpiritual enemies: Slay every luſt that
" yet lurks within, as knowing your domeſ-

" tic foes are the moſt dangerous; and with
" gentleneſs, meekneſs and wiſdom, by your
" holy conduct, your pious examples, your
" kind inſtructions, your friendly admoni-
" tions, ſpread the favour of divine know-
" ledge all around you, as ye are ſcattered
" here and there through a benighted world,
" labouring to win ſouls to Chriſt, to induce
" the deluded followers of Satan to deſert
" his camp, and enliſt as volunteers under
" your prince MESSIAH. And if the pow-
" ers of darkneſs ſhould rally all their for-
" ces, and a general battle, through all the
" Chriſtian world, come on, O love not your
" lives to the death! Sacrifice every earthly
" comfort in the glorious cauſe! Sing the
" triumphs of your victorious General, in
" priſons and at the ſtake, and die courage-
" ouſly, firmly believing the cauſe of truth
" and righteouſneſs will finally prevail."

Surely it is infinitely unbecoming the followers of him who is *King of Kings and Lord of Lords*, to turn aſide to earthly purſuits, or to ſink down in unmanly diſcouragements, or to give way to ſloth and effeminacy, when there is ſo much to be done, and the glorious day is coming on. How ſhould thoſe who handle the pen of the wri-

ter, exert themſelves to explain and vindicate divine truths, and paint the Chriſtian Religion in all its native glories! How ſhould the pulpit be animated, from Sabbath to Sabbath, with ſermons full of knowledge and light, full of ſpirit and life, full of zeal for God and love to men, and tender pity to infatuated ſinners! Chriſt loves to have his miniſters faithful, whether the wicked will hear or not.—And let pious parents be unwearied in their prayers for, and inſtructions of their children, and never faint under any diſcouragements; as knowing, that Chriſt is exalted to give repentance and remiſſion of ſins, and can do it for whom he will. Bring your children and friends, with all their ſpiritual diſeaſes, and lay them at his feet; as once they did their ſick, when this kind Saviour dwelt upon earth.—Let pious perſons of every age, and in every capacity, awake from ſleep, and ariſe from the dead, and live and act worthy their glorious character and high expectations; and in their ſeveral ſtations exert themſelves to the utmoſt to promote the Redeemer's glorious cauſe.—Let this age do their ſhare, as David, although the temple was not to be built in his day, yet exerted himſelf to lay up

materials for that magnificent edifice, on which his heart was intently ſet; as knowing that, in his ſon's day, it would be ſet up in all its glory.—So let us riſe up, and with the greateſt alacrity, contribute our utmoſt towards this building, this living temple, this temple all made of lively ſtones, of ſtones alive, in which God is to dwell, and which will infinitely exceed in glory the Temple of Solomon, that was built of dead timber and lifeleſs ſtones.—And let this be our daily prayer, an anſwer to which we may be aſſured of, whatever other requeſts are denied us, *Our Father which art in Heaven*, &c.—*for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever.* AMEN.

AN HUMBLE ATTEMPT TO PROMOTE EXPLICIT AGREEMENT AND VISIBLE UNION OF GOD'S PEOPLE IN *EXTRAORDINARY PRAYER*, FOR THE REVIVAL OF RELIGION AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM ON EARTH, PURSUANT TO SCRIPTURE-PROMISES AND PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE LAST TIME.

By *JONATHAN EDWARDS*, A.M.
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WITH A PREFACE BY SEVERAL MINISTERS.

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PREFACE

BY THE

EDITOR, IN ENGLAND.

OLNEY, May 4, 1789.

IF *any enquire why the enſuing work is republiſhed, I would beg leave to lay before them the following intelligence:*

At an aſſociation of the miniſters and meſſengers of the Baptiſt churches in the counties of Northampton, Leiceſter, &c. held at Nottingham, in the year 1784, *a reſolution was formed to eſtabliſh, through the aſſociation,* a meeting of prayer for the GENERAL revival and ſpread of religion. *This was to be obſerved the firſt Monday evening in every calendar month, by all the churches. It ſtill continues.—In* 1786, *another Baptiſt aſſociation, commonly called the* Midland, *held that year at Aulceſter, in the county of Warwick, entered into the ſame reſolution. Many other churches, particularly in Yorkſhire, have adopted, and now follow the above practice.—*

We have the pleaſure alſo to find, that ſeveral Pædo-Baptiſt *churches ſtatedly meet on thoſe evenings, for the ſame purpoſe.*

The re-publication of the following work, is with the avowed deſign of promoting the above agreement and practice. Thoſe concerned in its firſt inſtitution, never intended it ſhould be confined to any peculiar connection, or particular denomination. Rather they ardently wiſhed it might become general among the real friends of truth and holineſs. The advocates of error are indefatigable in their endeavours to overthrow the diſtinguiſhing and intereſting doctrines of Chriſtianity; thoſe doctrines which are the grounds of our hope, and ſources of our joy. Surely it becomes the followers of Chriſt, to uſe every effort, in order to ſtrengthen the things which remain.

By re-publiſhing the following work, I do not conſider myſelf as becoming anſwerable for every ſentiment it contains. An author and an editor are very diſtinct characters. Should any entertain different views reſpecting ſome of the prophecies in the inſpired page, from thoſe that are here advanced, yet ſuch may, and I hope will, approve of the general deſign.

In the preſent imperfect ſtate, we may reaſonably expect a diverſity of ſentiments upon religious matters. Each ought to think for

himself; and every one has a right, on proper occasions, to shew his opinion. Yet all should remember, that there are but two parties in the world, each engaged in opposite causes; the cause of God and of Satan; of holiness and of sin; of heaven and hell. The advancement of the one, and the downfall of the other, must appear exceedingly desirable to every real friend of God and man. If such, in some respects entertain different sentiments, and practise distinguishing modes of worship, surely they may unite in the above business. O for thousands upon thousands, divided into small bands in their respective cities, towns, villages and neighbourhood, all met at the same time, and in pursuit of one end, offering up their united prayers, like so many ascending clouds of incense before the Most High! May he shower down blessings on all the scattered tribes of Zion! Grace, great grace be with all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity! AMEN!

JOHN SUTCLIFF.

THE

PREFACE.

THE ruin of Satan's miſerable kingdom, and the advancement of the univerſal and happy reign of Chriſt on the earth, were included and hinted in the ſentence denounced on the ſerpent, that the *ſeed of the woman ſhould bruiſe his head.* What was a terrible threatening to Satan, in the ſurprized ears of our firſt guilty parents, implied a joyful prophecy, to keep them from deſpair, and enliven their hopes for themſelves and their deſcendants, of obtaining by this ſeed of her's an eternal triumph over him who had ſo ſadly foiled them. And it is likely, their hopes and faith immediately aroſe, laid hold on the reviving prophecy, earneſtly deſired its happy accompliſhment, and tranſmitted it to their poſterity.

But though this prophecy was at firſt only delivered in the form of a threatening to Satan; it was afterwards directly given in the form of a promiſe to Abraham, though ſtill in general terms, that *in his ſeed ſhould all*

the nations of the earth be bleſſed. Yet this general promiſe was more clearly by degrees explained in the following ages, to mean a Divine King, no other than the Son of God aſſuming human nature of the ſeed of Abraham, Iſaac, Jacob and David; that ſhould be born of a virgin in Bethlehem of Judah; and at firſt deſpiſed, abuſed, rejected, and put to death; but ſhould riſe to immortal life, aſcend to heaven, and thence extend his bleſſed kingdom over all nations; not by outward force, but inward overcoming influence, by his word and ſpirit, making them *his willing people in the day of his power;* and reigning in glorious light and holineſs, and love and peace for ever; and the advancement of this univerſal and happy reign has been the earneſt deſire and prayer of the ſaints in all ages to the preſent day.

But how great the honour and how lively the encouragement given in ſcripture to thoſe their prayers; by repreſenting them as offered by Chriſt himſelf with the fragrant incenſe of his own merits and interceſſion, on the *golden altar before the throne,* and aſcending together in one grateful perfume to God! And how cheering to every ſaint is that pro-

miſe of his—*From the riſing of the ſun, even to the going down of the ſame, my name ſhall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incenſe ſhall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering!* How pleaſing to God and the heavenly hoſts to ſee, as the ſun goes round the globe, this grateful incenſe riſing from every part on high! and the more extenſive and inceſſant are theſe prayers, aſcending from the circle of the earth, the more does this bleſſed promiſe go into its deſired fulfilment, and the holy God is more pleaſed and glorified.

To promote the increaſe, concurrency, and conſtancy of theſe acceptable prayers, is the great intention both of the pious memorial of our reverend and dear brethren in Scotland, and of the worthy author of this exciting eſſay. And this deſign we cannot but recommend to all who deſire the coming of this bliſsful kingdom in its promiſed extent and glory, in this wretched world.

As to the author's ingenious obſervations on the prophecies, we entirely leave them to the reader's judgment: with only obſerving, though it is the apprehenſion of many learned men, that there is to be a very ge-

neral ſlaughter of the witneſſes of Chriſt about the time of their finiſhing their teſtimony to the pure worſhip and truths of the goſpel, about three or four years before the ſeventh angel ſounds his trumpet for the ruin of Antichriſt;—yet we cannot ſee that this is any juſt objection againſt our joint and earneſt prayers for the glorious age ſucceeding, or for the haſtening of it.

For if ſuch a terrible time is coming in Europe, which we in depending America are likely to ſhare in; the more need we have of joining in earneſt and conſtant prayers for extraordinary ſuffering graces for ourſelves and others. And that ſuch a time is coming on the members of Chriſt, is no more an objection againſt their prayers for the haſtening of the following glory, than it was before the incarnation of him their head, that his moſt bitter ſufferings were to precede the ſpreading of this joyous kingdom among the nations. And the nearer the day approaches, the more need we have to be awakened to continual watchfulneſs and prayer.

May God pour out on all his people abundantly, the ſpirit of grace and ſupplication, and prepare them for the amazing

changes haſtening on the earth, both for previous trials and for following glories!

Joſeph Sewall,
Thomas Prince,
John Webb,
Thomas Foxcroft,
Joſhua Gee.
} Miniſters in Boſton.

BOSTON, N. E. *January* 12, 1747-8.

62.

An HUMBLE ATTEMPT *to promote an explicit* AGREEMENT *and visible* UNION *of God's People through the World, in* EXTRAORDINARY PRAYER, *for the* REVIVAL *of* RELIGION, *and the Advancement of* CHRIST'S KINGDOM *on Earth, pursuant to Scripture-Promises and Prophecies concerning the* LAST TIME.

OCCASIONED

By a late Memorial published by a Number of Ministers in Scotland, and sent over to America, giving an Account of a certain Concert for Prayer, which has already been come into by many Ministers and others in Great Britain and some other Parts, and in which they desire the general Concurrence of their Christian Brethren every where.

CONTAINING

A Copy of the said Memorial, with a more particular View of the Affair it relates to; a Variety of Arguments and Persuasives to comply with the Motion therein made, for united and extraordinary Prayer; and Answers to some Objections.

TOGETHER WITH

Seasonable Considerations on the Aspects of Providence in many late wonderful Dispensations, and the present State of Things in the Church and moral World; pointing out the Fulfilling of the Scriptures, and the Voice of God to his People, in these Events.

By *JONATHAN EDWARDS*, A. M.
Minister of the Gospel in Northampton, N. E.

PART I.

The text opened, and an account given of the affair propoſed in the memorial from Scotland.

ZECHARIAH viii. 20, 21, 22.

Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts—It ſhall yet come to paſs, that there ſhall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities; and the inhabitants of one city ſhall go unto another, ſaying—Let us go ſpeedily to pray before the Lord, and to ſeek the Lord of Hoſts. I will go alſo. Yea, many people and ſtrong nations ſhall come to ſeek the Lord of Hoſts in Jeruſalem, and to pray before the Lord.

IN this chapter we have a prophecy of a future glorious advancement of the church of God; wherein it is evident, ſomething further is intended than ever was fulfilled to the nation of the Jews under the Old Teſtament. For here are plain prophecies of ſuch things as never were fulfilled before the coming of the Meſſiah; particularly what is ſaid in the two laſt verſes in the chapter, of *many people and ſtrong nations worſhipping and ſeeking the true God*, and of ſo great an acceſſion of Gentile nations to the church of God, that by far the greater part of the viſible worſhippers of God ſhould conſiſt of this new acceſſion, ſo that they ſhould be to the other as *ten to one*—a certain number

for an uncertain. There never happened any thing, from the time of the prophet Zechariah to the coming of Chriſt, to anſwer this prophecy; and it can have no fulfilment but either in the calling of the Gentiles, in and after the days of the apoſtles, or in the future glorious enlargement of the church of God in the latter ages of the world, ſo often foretold by the prophets of the Old Teſtament, and by the prophet Zechariah in particular, in the latter part of his prophecy. It is moſt probable, that what the ſpirit of God has chief reſpect to, is that laſt and greateſt enlargement and moſt glorious advancement of the church of God on earth, in the benefits of which eſpecially the Jewiſh nation were to have a ſhare, and a very eminent and diſtinguiſhing ſhare. There is a great agreement between what is here ſaid and other prophecies, that muſt manifeſtly have reſpect to the church's latter-day-glory; as that in Iſaiah lx. 2, 3, 4. *The Lord ſhall ariſe upon thee, and his glory ſhall be ſeen upon thee; and the Gentiles ſhall come to thy light, and kings to the brightneſs of thy riſing. Lift up thine eyes round about, and ſee; all they gather themſelves together, they come to thee.* That whole chapter, beyond all diſ-

pute, has reſpect to the moſt glorious ſtate of the church of God on earth. So chap. lxvi. 8. *Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Shall a nation be born at once?*—verſe 10. *Rejoice ye with Jeruſalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her.*—verſe 12. *I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing ſtream.*—Mich. iv. at the beginning: *but in the laſt day it ſhall come to paſs, that the mountain of the houſe of the Lord ſhall be eſtabliſhed in the top of the mountain, and it ſhall be exalted above the hills, and people ſhall flow unto it; and many nations ſhall come and ſay, come, and let us go up unto the mountain of the Lord, and to the houſe of the God of Jacob. And he ſhall judge among many people, and rebuke ſtrong nations afar off; and they ſhall beat their ſwords into plowſhares, and their ſpears into pruning-hooks; nation ſhall not lift up ſword againſt nation, neither ſhall they learn war any more.*—See alſo, *Iſaiah* ii. at the beginning. There has been nothing yet brought to paſs in any meaſure to anſwer theſe prophecies. And as the prophecy in my text and the following verſe does agree with them, ſo there is rea-

ſon to think it has a reſpect to the ſame times. And indeed there is a remarkable agreement in the deſcription given throughout the chapter, with the repreſentations made of thoſe times elſewhere in the prophets, as may be ſeen by comparing ver. 3. with *Iſaiah* lx. 14.—ver. 4. with *Iſaiah* lxv. 20, 22. and xxxiii. 24.—ver. 6, 7, 8. with *Ezek.* xxxvii. 2, 11, 12, 21.—ver. 7. with *Iſaiah* xliii. 5, 6. and xlix. 12. and lix. 19. —ver. 12, 13. with *Hoſea* ii. 21, 22. and *Ezek.* xxxiv. 22—29.—ver. 8, 12, 13. with *Ezek.* xxxvi. 28—30.—ver. 13. with *Zeph.* iii. 20. and *Iſaiah* xix. 24.—ver. 19. with *Iſaiah* lxi. 3. and *Jer.* xxxi. 12, 13, 14.

So that however the prophet, in ſome things that are ſaid in this chapter, may have reſpect to future ſmiles of heaven on the nation of the Jews, lately returned from the Babyloniſh captivity, and reſettled in the land of Canaan, in a great increaſe of their numbers and wealth, and the return of more captives from Chaldea and other countries, &c. yet the ſpirit of God has doubtleſs reſpect to things far greater than theſe, and of which theſe were but faint reſemblances.—We find it common in the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, that when the prophets are

ſpeaking of the favours and bleſſings of God on the Jews, attending or following their return from the Babyloniſh captivity, the ſpirit of God takes occaſion from thence to ſpeak of the incomparably greater bleſſings on the church, that ſhall attend and follow her deliverance from the ſpiritual or myſtical Babylon, of which thoſe were a type; and is, as it were, led away to ſpeak almoſt wholly of theſe latter, and vaſtly greater things, ſo as to ſeem to forget the former.

And whereas the prophet, in this chapter, ſpeaks of God's *bringing his people again from the eaſt and weſt to Jeruſalem,* (ver. 7, 8.) *And multitudes of all nations taking hold of the ſkirts of the Jews;* ſo far as we may ſuppoſe that this means literally that nation of the poſterity of Jacob, it cannot have chief reſpect to any return of the Jews from Babylon and other countries in thoſe ancient times before Chriſt, for no ſuch things as are here ſpoken of, attended any ſuch return; but it muſt have reſpect to the great calling and gathering of the Jews into the fold of Chriſt, and their being received to the bleſſings of his kingdom, after the fall of Antichriſt, or the deſtruction of myſtical Babylon.

In the text we have an account how this future glorious advancement of the church of God ſhould be brought on, or introduced, viz. By great multitudes in different towns and countries taking up a joint reſolution, and coming into an expreſs and viſible agreement, that they will, by united and extraordinary prayer, ſeek to God that he would come and manifeſt himſelf, and grant the tokens and fruits of his gracious preſence.—Particularly we may obſerve,

1. The duty, with the attendance on which the glorious event foretold ſhall be brought on, viz. The duty of prayer.—Prayer, ſome ſuppoſe, is here to be taken ſynechdochically, for the whole of the worſhip of God—prayer being a principal part of the worſhip of the church of God in the days of the goſpel, when ſacrifices are aboliſhed; and ſo, that this is to be underſtood only as a prophecy of a great revival of religion, and of the true worſhip of God among his viſible people, the acceſſion of others to the church, and turning of multitudes from idolatry to the worſhip of the true God. But it appears to me reaſonable, to ſuppoſe, that ſomething more ſpecial is intended, with regard to the duty of prayer; conſidering that prayer is

here expreſsly and repeatedly mentioned; and alſo conſidering how parallel this place is with many other prophecies, that ſpeak of an extraordinary ſpirit of prayer, as preceding and introducing that glorious day of revival of religion, and advancement of the church's peace and proſperity, ſo often foretold, (which I ſhall have occaſion to mention hereafter) and particularly the agreeableneſs of what is here ſaid, with what is ſaid afterwards by the ſame prophet, of the *pouring out of a ſpirit of grace and ſupplications*, as that with which this great revival of religion ſhall begin, chap. xii. 10.

2. The good, that ſhall be ſought by prayer; which is God himſelf.—It is ſaid once and again, *They ſhall go to pray before the Lord, and to ſeek the Lord of Hoſts.* This is the good they aſk for and ſeek by prayer, *The Lord of Hoſts* himſelf.—To ſeek God, as the expreſſion may, perhaps, be ſometimes uſed in ſcripture, may ſignify no more than ſeeking the favour or mercy of God. And if it be taken ſo here, *praying before the Lord*, and *ſeeking the Lord of Hoſts*, muſt be looked upon as ſynonymous expreſſions. And it muſt be confeſſed to be a common thing in ſcripture, to ſignify the ſame thing re-

peatedly, by various expreſſions of the ſame import, for the greater emphaſis.—But certainly that expreſſion of *ſeeking the Lord*, is very commonly uſed to ſignify ſomething more than merely, in general, to ſeek ſome mercy of God: It implies that God himſelf is the great good deſired and ſought after; that the bleſſings purſued are God's gracious preſence, the bleſſed manifeſtations of him, union and intercourſe with him; or, in ſhort, God's manifeſtations and communications of himſelf by his Holy Spirit. Thus the pſalmiſt deſired God, thirſted after him, and ſought him. *O God, thou art my God; early will I ſeek thee. My fleſh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirſty land, where no water is, to ſee thy power and thy glory, ſo as I have ſeen thee in the ſanctuary.—My ſoul followeth hard after thee.—Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I deſire beſides thee.* The pſalmiſt earneſtly purſued after God, *his ſoul thirſted after him, he ſtretched forth his hands unto him*, &c. And therefore it is in ſcripture the peculiar character of the ſaints, that they are *thoſe that ſeek God. This is the generation of them that ſeek him. Your heart ſhall live that ſeek God.* And in many other places. If the expreſ-

ſion in the text be underſtood agreeably to this ſenſe, then by ſeeking the Lord of Hoſts, we muſt underſtand a ſeeking that God, who had withdrawn, or as it were hid himſelf, for a long time, would return to his church, and grant the tokens and fruits of his gracious preſence, and thoſe bleſſed communications of his ſpirit to his people, and to mankind on the earth, which he had often promiſed, and which his church had long waited for.

And it ſeems reaſonable to underſtand the phraſe, *ſeeking the Lord of Hoſts*, in this ſenſe here, and not as merely ſignifying the ſame thing with praying to God; not only becauſe the expreſſion is repeatedly added to praying before the Lord, in the text, as ſignifying ſomething more; but alſo becauſe the phraſe, taken in this ſenſe, is exactly agreeable to other parallel prophetic repreſentations. Thus God's people's ſeeking, by earneſt prayer, the promiſed reſtoration of the church of God, after the Babyloniſh captivity, and the great apoſtacy that occaſioned it, is called their *ſeeking God, and ſearching for him;* and God's granting this promiſed revival and reſtoration is called his being *found of them. For thus ſaith the Lord,*

that after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word towards you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye go and call upon me, and I will hearken unto you; and ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart; and I will be found of you, saith the Lord, and I will turn away your captivity. And the prophets, from time to time, represent God, in a low and afflicted state of his church, as being withdrawn, and hiding himself. *Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour. I hid me, and was wroth.* And they represent God's people, while his church is in such a state, before God delivers and restores the same, as seeking him, looking for him, searching and waiting for him, and calling after him. *I will go and return unto my place, 'till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.* And when God, in answer to their prayers and succeeding their endeavors, delivers, restores, and advances his church, according to his promise, then

he is said to answer, and come, and say, here am I, and to shew himself; and they are said to find him, and see him plainly. *Then shalt thou cry, and he shall say,* HERE I AM. *But Israel shall be saved in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation. I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain. The Lord will wipe away the tears from off all faces, and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off the earth. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us: This is the Lord, we have waited for him; we will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation. We have waited for thee: The desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early. For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Therefore my people shall know my name; therefore they shall know in that day, that I am he that doth speak: behold,* IT IS I. *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion—Thy*

God reigneth! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice, together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion.

3. We may observe who they are, that shall be united in thus seeking the Lord of Hosts; *the inhabitants of many cities*, and of many countries, *yea, many people and strong nations*; great multitudes in different parts of the world shall conspire in this business. From the representation made in the prophecy, it appears rational to suppose, that it will be fulfilled something after this manner—First, that there shall be given much of a spirit of prayer to God's people, in many places, disposing them to come into an express agreement, unitedly to pray to God in an extraordinary manner, that he would appear for the help of his church, and in mercy to mankind, and pour out his Spirit, revive his work, and advance his spiritual kingdom in the world, as he has promised; and that this disposition to such prayer, and union in it, will gradually spread more and more, and increase to greater degrees; with which at length will gradually be introduced a revival of religion, and a disposition to greater engagedness in the worship and ser-

vice of God, amongſt his profeſſing people; that this being obſerved will be the means of awakening others, making them ſenſible of the wants of their ſouls, and exciting in them a great concern for their ſpiritual and everlaſting good, and putting them upon earneſtly crying to God for ſpiritual mercies, and diſpoſing them to join with God's people in that extraordinary ſeeking and ſerving of God, which they ſhall ſee them engaged in; and that in this manner religion ſhall be propagated, until the awakening reaches thoſe that are in the higheſt ſtations, and until whole nations be awakened, and there be at length an acceſſion of many of the chief nations of the world to the church of God. Thus after the inhabitants of many cities of Iſrael, or of God's profeſſing people, have taken up, and purſued a joint reſolution, to go and pray before the Lord, and ſeek the Lord of Hoſts, others ſhall be drawn to worſhip and ſerve him with them; till at length many people and ſtrong nations ſhall join themſelves to them; and there ſhall, in proceſs of time, be a vaſt acceſſion to the church, ſo that it ſhall be ten times as large as it was before; yea, at length all nations ſhall be converted unto God.—

Thus ten men ſhall take hold, out of all languages of the nations, of the ſkirt of him that is a Jew, (in the ſenſe of the Apoſtle) ſaying, "We will go with you, for we have "heard that God is with you." And thus that ſhall be fulfilled, *O thou that heareſt prayer, unto thee ſhall all fleſh come.*

4. We may obſerve the mode of their union in this duty. It is a viſible union, an union by explicit agreement, a joint reſolution declared by one to another, come into by being firſt propoſed by ſome, and readily and expreſsly fallen in with by others.—The inhabitants of one city ſhall apply themſelves to the inhabitants of another, ſaying, *let us go*, &c. Thoſe to whom the motion is made, ſhall comply with it, the propoſal ſhall take with many, it ſhall be a prevailing, ſpreading thing; one ſhall follow another's example, one and another ſhall ſay, *I will go alſo.* Some ſuppoſe, that thoſe words—*I will go alſo*—are to be taken as the words of him that makes the propoſal; as much as to ſay, I do not propoſe that to you, which I am not willing to do myſelf, I deſire you to go, and I am ready to go with you. But this is to ſuppoſe no more to be expreſſed in theſe latter words, than was expreſſed be-

fore in the propoſal itſelf; for theſe words, *let us go,* ſignify as much, as that I am willing to go, and deſire you to go with me. It ſeems to me much more natural, to underſtand theſe latter words as importing the conſent of thoſe to whom the propoſal is made, or the reply of one and another that falls in it. This is much more agreeable to the plain deſign of the text, which is to repreſent the concurrence of great numbers in this affair, and more agreeable to the repreſentation made in the next verſe, of one following another, many taking hold of the ſkirt of him that is a Jew. And though if the words are thus underſtood, we muſt ſuppoſe an ellipſis in the text, ſomething underſtood that is not expreſſed, as if it had been ſaid—Thoſe of other cities ſhall ſay—I will go alſo;—yet this is not difficult to be ſuppoſed, ſuch ellipſis are very common in ſcripture. We have one exactly parallel with it in Jer. iii. 22. *Return, ye backſliding children, and I will heal your backſlidings: behold, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God,* i. e. the backſliding children ſhall ſay—"Behold we come unto thee," &c. And in Cant. iv. *Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleaſant fruits.*—

I am come into my garden, my ſiſter, my ſpouſe, i. e. her beloved ſhall ſay—"I am come into my garden." We have the like throughout that ſong. So Pſal. l. 6, 7. *The heavens ſhall declare his righteouſneſs, for God is judge himſelf. Hear, O my people, and I will ſpeak,* i. e. the Judge ſhall ſay—"Hear, O my people," &c. The pſalms and prophets abound with ſuch figures of ſpeech.

5. We may obſerve the manner of prayer agreed on, or the manner in which they agree, to engage in and perform the duty. Let us go ſpeedily to pray; or as it in the margin, let us go continually. The words literally tranſlated are, *let us go in going.* Such an ingemination or doubling of words, is very common in the Hebrew language, when it is intended that a thing ſhall be very ſtrongly expreſſed; it generally implies the ſuperlative degree of a thing; as the holy of holies ſignifies the moſt holy; but it commonly denotes, not only the utmoſt degree of a thing, but alſo the utmoſt certainty; as when God ſaid to *Abraham, in multiplying, I will multiply thy ſeed.* It implies both that God would certainly multiply his ſeed, and alſo multiply it exceedingly. So when God ſaid to *Adam, in the day that thou eateſt thereof, in*

dying thou ſhalt die (as the words are in the original) it implies, both that he ſhould ſurely die, and alſo that he ſhould die moſt terribly, ſhould utterly periſh, and be deſtroyed to the utmoſt degree. Yea, ſometimes it ſeems to imply ſomething elſe ſtill; and, in ſhort, as this ingemination of words in the Hebrew, in general, denotes the ſtrength of expreſſion, ſo it is uſed to ſignify almoſt all thoſe things that are wont to be ſignified by the various forms of ſtrong ſpeech in other languages: ſometimes it ſignifies the utmoſt degree of a thing; ſometimes certainty; ſometimes peremptorineſs and terribleneſs of a threatening, or the greatneſs and poſitiveneſs of a promiſe, the ſtrictneſs of a command, and the earneſtneſs of a requeſt.—When God ſays to *Adam, dying thou ſhalt die,* it is equivalent to ſuch ſtrong expreſſions in Engliſh, as, thou ſhalt die indeed, or, thou ſhalt die with a witneſs. So when it is ſaid in the text, *let us go in going, and pray before the Lord,* the ſtrength of the expreſſion repreſents the earneſtneſs of thoſe that make the propoſal, their great engagedneſs in the affair; and with reſpect to the duty propoſed, it may be underſtood to ſignify that they ſhould be ſpeedy, fervent, and

conſtant in it; or, in one word, that it ſhould be thoroughly performed.

6. We may learn from the tenor of this prophecy, together with the context, that this union in ſuch prayer is foretold as a becoming and happy thing, and that which would be acceptable to God, and attended with glorious ſucceſs.

From the whole we may infer, that it is a very ſuitable thing, and well pleaſing to God, for many people, in different parts of the world, by expreſs agreement, to come into a viſible union, in extraordinary, ſpeedy, fervent, and conſtant prayer, for thoſe great effuſions of the Holy Spirit, which ſhall bring on that advancement of Chriſt's church and kingdom, that God has ſo often promiſed ſhall be in the latter ages of the world.

And ſo from hence I would infer the duty of God's people, with regard to the memorial lately ſent over into America, from Scotland, by a number of miniſters there, propoſing a method for ſuch an union as has been ſpoken of, in extraordinary prayer for this great mercy.

And it being the ſpecial deſign of this diſcourſe, to perſuade ſuch as are friends to

the intereſts of Chriſt's kingdom, to a compliance with the propoſal and requeſt made in that memorial, I ſhall firſt give a ſhort hiſtorical account of the affair it relates to, from letters, papers, and pamphlets, that have come over from Scotland; to which I ſhall annex the memorial itſelf; and then I ſhall offer ſome arguments and motives, tending to induce the friends of religion to fall in with what is propoſed; and laſtly, make anſwer to ſome objections that may poſſibly be made againſt it.

As to the firſt of theſe things, viz. an hiſtorical account of the concert, which the memorial relates to, the following obſervations may give a ſufficient view of that affair.

In October. A. D. 1744, a number of miniſters in Scotland, taking into conſideration the ſtate of God's church, and of the world of mankind, judged that the providence of God, at ſuch a day, did loudly call ſuch as were concerned for the welfare of Zion, to united extraordinary applications to the God of all grace, ſuitably acknowledging Him as the fountain of all the ſpiritual benefits and bleſſings of his church, and ear-

neſtly praying to him, that he would appear in his glory, and favour Zion, and manifeſt his compaſſion to the world of mankind, by an abundant effuſion of his Holy Spirit on all the churches, and the whole habitable earth, to revive true religion in all parts of Chriſtendom, and to deliver all nations from their great and manifold ſpiritual calamities and miſeries, and bleſs them with the unſpeakable benefits of the kingdom of our glorious Redeemer, and fill the whole earth with his glory. And conſulting one another on the ſubject, they looked on themſelves, for their own part, obliged to engage in this duty; and, as far as in them lay, to perſuade others to the ſame; and to endeavour to find out, and fix on ſome method, that ſhould moſt effectually tend to promote, and uphold ſuch extraordinary application to heaven among God's people. And after ſeeking to God by prayer for direction, they determined on the following method, as what they would conform to in their own practice, and propoſe to be practiſed by others, for the two years next following, viz. To ſet apart ſome time on Saturday evening, and Sabbath morning, every week, for the purpoſe aforeſaid, as other duties would al-

low to every one reſpectively; and more ſolemnly, the firſt Tueſday of each quarter, (beginning with the firſt Tueſday of November, then next enſuing) either the whole day, or part of the day, as perſons find themſelves diſpoſed, or think their circumſtances will allow; the time to be ſpent either in private praying ſocieties, or in public meetings, or alone in ſecret, as ſhall be found moſt practicable, or judged moſt convenient, by ſuch as are willing, in ſome way or other, to join in this affair; but not that any ſhould make any promiſes, or be looked upon as under ſtrict bonds in any reſpect, conſtantly and without fail to obſerve every one of theſe days, whatever their circumſtances ſhould be, or however other duties and neceſſary affairs might interfere; or that perſons ſhould look upon themſelves bound with regard to theſe days in any wiſe as tho' the time were holy, or the ſetting them apart for religious purpoſes were eſtabliſhed by ſacred authority; but yet, as a proper guard againſt negligence and unſteadineſs, and a prudent preſervative, from yielding to a diſpoſition, which perſons might be liable to, through the prevalence of indolence

and liftleſſneſs, to excuſe themſelves on trivial occaſions, it was propoſed, that thoſe who unite in this affair ſhould reſolve with themſelves, that if, by urgent buſineſs, or otherwiſe, they are hindered from joining with others, on the very day agreed on, yet they would not wholly neglect bearing their part in the duty propoſed, but would take the firſt convenient day following, for that purpoſe.

The reaſon why Saturday evening and Lord's-day morning were judged moſt convenient for the weekly ſeaſons, was, that theſe times being ſo near the time of diſpenſing goſpel ordinances through the Chriſtian world, which are the great means, in the uſe of which God is wont to grant his Spirit to mankind, and the principal means that the Spirit of God makes uſe of to carry on his work of grace, it may be well ſuppoſed, that the minds of Chriſtians, in general, will, at theſe ſeaſons, be eſpecially diſengaged from ſecular affairs, and diſpoſed to pious meditations and the duties of devotion, and more naturally led to ſeek communications of the Holy Spirit, and ſucceſs of the means of grace. And as to the quarterly times, it was thought helpful to memory, that they

ſhould be on one or other of the firſt days of each quarter; Tueſday was preferred to Monday, becauſe in ſome places people might have public prayers and ſermon on the ſtated day, which might not be ſo convenient on Monday, as on ſome day at a greater diſtance from the Sabbath.

It was reckoned a chief uſe of ſuch an agreement and method as this, that it would be a good expedient for the maintaining and keeping up, amongſt the people of God, that great Chriſtian duty of prayerfulneſs for the coming of Chriſt's kingdom, in general, which Chriſt has directed his followers to be ſo much in, that it may not be out of mind, and in a great meaſure ſunk. Things, that we are too little inclined to, through ſloth, carnality, or a fulneſs of our own worldly and private concerns, and that are to be attended at ſome ſeaſons or other, but have no ſpecial ſeaſons ſtated for them, are apt to be forgotten, or put off from time to time, and, as it were, adjourned without day; and ſo, if not wholly neglected, yet too little attended. But when we fix certain ſeaſons, which we reſolve, unleſs extraordinarily hindered, to devote to the duty, it tends to prevent

forgetfulneſs, and a ſettled negligence of it. The certain returns of the ſeaſon will naturally refreſh the memory, will tend to put us in mind of the precept of Chriſt, and the obligations that lie on all his followers, to abound in ſuch a duty, and renewedly engage us to the conſideration of the importance, neceſſity and unſpeakable value of the mercy ſought; and ſo, by frequent renovation, to keep alive the conſideration, and ſenſe of theſe things at all times. Thus the firſt promoters of this agreement judged that it would be ſubſervient to more abundant prayerfulneſs for effuſions of the Holy Spirit at all times through the year, both in ſecret and ſocial worſhip; particularly as to this laſt, in congregations, families, and other praying ſocieties. And then they alſo judged, that ſuch an agreed union would tend to animate and encourage God's people in the duty propoſed; and that particular perſons and ſocieties, knowing that great multitudes of their fellow-Chriſtians, in ſo many diſtant places, were, at the ſame time, (as a token of the union of their hearts with them in this affair) by agreement, engaged in the ſame holy exerciſe, would naturally be enlivened in the duty by ſuch a conſideration.

It was not thought beſt to propoſe at firſt a longer time for the continuance of this preciſe method than two years; it being conſidered, that it is not poſſible, before any trial, ſo well to judge of the expedience of a particular method and certain circumſtances of the managing and ordering ſuch an affair, as after ſome time of experience. And it was not known, but that, after long conſideration, and ſome trial, it might be thought beſt to alter ſome circumſtance; or whether others that had not yet been conſulted, might not propoſe a better method. The time firſt agreed on, though but ſhort, was thought ſufficient to give opportunity for judgment and experience, and for ſuch as were diſpoſed to union in an affair of ſuch a nature, in diſtant places, mutually to communicate their ſentiments on the ſubject.

The way, which thoſe that firſt projected and came into this agreement, thought beſt for the giving notice of it and propoſing it to others, was not by any thing publiſhed from the preſs, but by perſonal converſation with ſuch as they could conveniently have immediate acceſs to, and by private correſpondence with others at a diſtance. At firſt it was intended, that ſome formal paper, pro-

poſing the matter, ſhould be ſent about for proper amendments and improvements, and then concurrence; but on more mature deliberation, it was conſidered how this might give a handle to objections, (which they tho't it beſt, to the utmoſt, to avoid in the infancy of the affair) and how practicable it was, without any ſuch formality, to ſpread the ſubſtance of the propoſal by private letters, together with a requeſt to their correſpondents, mutually to communicate their tho'ts. Therefore this was fixed on, as the method that was preferable at the beginning. Accordingly, they propoſed and endeavoured to promote the affair in this way, and with ſuch ſucceſs, that great numbers in Scotland and England fell in with the propoſal, and ſome in North America. As to Scotland, it was complied with by numbers, in the four chief towns, Edinburgh, Glaſgow, Aberdeen, and Dundee, and many country towns and congregations in various parts of the land. One of the miniſters, that was primarily concerned in this affair, in a letter to one of his correſpondents, ſpeaks of an explicit declaration of the concurrence of the praying ſocieties in Edinburgh, which they had made in a letter. The number of the

praying ſocieties in that city is very conſiderable. Mr. Robe, of Kilſyth, (in a letter to Mr. Prince, of Boſton, dated November 3, 1743,) ſays—There were then above thirty ſocieties of young people there, newly erected, ſome of which conſiſted of upwards of thirty members.—As to Glaſgow, this union was unanimouſly agreed to by about forty-five praying ſocieties there, as an eminent miniſter in that city informs, in a letter.

The two years, firſt agreed on, ended laſt November. A little before this time expired, a number of miniſters in Scotland agreed on a memorial, to be printed and ſent abroad to their brethren in various parts, propoſing to them, and requeſting of them, to join with them in the continuance of this method of united prayer, and in endeavours to promote it. Copies of which memorial have lately been ſent over into New-England, to the number of near five hundred, directed to be diſtributed in almoſt every county in this province of the Maſſachuſetts-Bay, and alſo in ſeveral parts of Connecticut, New-Hampſhire, Rhode-Iſland, New-York, New-Jerſey, Pennſylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Carolina, and Georgia. The moſt, I ſup-

pose, of these were sent to one of the congregational ministers in Boston, with a letter subscribed by twelve ministers in Scotland, about the affair; many of them to another of the said ministers of Boston, and some to a minister in Connecticut. It being short, I shall here insert a copy of it at length —It is as follows:

A MEMORIAL *from several Ministers in Scotland, to their Brethren in different places, for continuing a* CONCERT *for* PRAYER, *first entered into in the Year* 1744.

WHEREAS it was the chief scope of this concert, to promote more abundant application to a duty that is perpetually binding, *prayer that our Lord's kingdom may come,* joined with *praises;* and it contained some circumstantial expedients, apprehended to be very subservient to that design, relating to stated times for such exercises, so far as this would not interfere with other duties; particularly a part of Saturday evening and Sabbath morning, every week; and more solemnly of some one of the first days of each of the four great divisions of the year, that is, of each quarter; as the first Tuesday, or first convenient day af-

ter;* and the concert, as to this circumſtance, was extended only to two years; it being intended that, before theſe expired, perſons engaged in the concert ſhould reciprocally communicate their ſentiments and inclinations, as to the prolonging of the time, with or without alteration, as to the circumſtance mentioned; and it was intended by the firſt promoters, that others at a diſtance ſhould propoſe ſuch circumſtantial amendments or improvements, as they ſhould find proper; it is hereby earneſtly intreated, that ſuch would communicate their ſentiments accordingly, now that the time firſt propoſed is near expiring.

2. To induce thoſe already engaged to adhere, and others to accede to this concert, it ſeems of importance to obſerve, that declarations of concurrence, the communicating and ſpreading of which are ſo evidently uſeful, are to be underſtood in ſuch a latitude, as to keep at the greateſt diſtance from entangling mens' minds: not as binding men to ſet apart any ſtated days from ſecular affairs, or even to fix on any part of

NOTE.

* The meaning is the firſt Tueſdays of February, May, Auguſt and November, or the firſt convenient days after theſe.

ſuch and ſuch preciſe days, whether it be convenient or not; nor as abſolute promiſes in any reſpect, but as friendly, harmonious reſolutions, with liberty to alter circumſtances as ſhall be found expedient. On account of all which latitude, and that the circumſtantial part extends only to a few years, it is apprehended, the concert cannot be liable to the objections againſt periodical religious times of human appointment.

3. It is alſo humbly offered to the conſideration of miniſters, and others furniſhed with gifts for the moſt public inſtructions, whether it might not be of great uſe, by the bleſſing of God, if ſhort and nervous ſcripture perſuaſives and directions to the duty in view, were compoſed and publiſhed, (either by particular authors, or ſeveral joining together, which laſt way might ſometimes have peculiar advantages) and that, from time to time, without too great intervals, the better to keep alive on mens' minds a juſt ſenſe of the obligations to a duty ſo important in itſelf, and in which many may be in danger to faint and turn remiſs, without ſuch repeated incitements; and whether it would not alſo be of great uſe, if miniſters would be pleaſed to preach frequently on the im-

portance and neceſſity of prayer for the coming of our Lord's kingdom, particularly near the quarterly days, or on theſe days themſelves, where there is public worſhip at that time.

4. They who have found it incumbent on them to publiſh this Memorial at this time, having peculiar advantages for ſpreading it, do intreat that the deſire of concurrence and aſſiſtance, contained in it, may, by no means, be underſtood as reſtricted to any particular denomination or party, or to thoſe who are of ſuch or ſuch opinions about any former inſtances of remarkable religious concern; but to be extended to all who ſhall vouchſafe any attention to this paper, and have at heart the intereſt of vital chriſtianity, and the power of godlineſs; and who, however differing about other things, are convinced of the importance of fervent prayer, to promote that common intereſt, and of ſcripture perſuaſives to promote ſuch prayer.

5. As the firſt printed account of this concert was not a propoſal of it, as a thing then to begin, but a narration of it, as a deſign already ſet on foot, which had been brought about with much harmony, by means of private letters, ſo the farther countinuance, and,

it is hoped, the farther ſpreading of it ſeems in a promiſing way of being promoted by the ſame means, as importunate deſires of the renewing the concert have been tranſmitted already from a very diſtant corner abroad, where the regard to it has of late increaſed; but, notwithſtanding of what may be done by private letters, it is humbly expected, that a memorial ſpread in this manner may, by God's bleſſing, farther promote the good ends in view, as it may be uſefully referred to in letters, and may reach where they will not.

6. Whereas in a valuable letter, from the corner juſt now mentioned, as a place where regard to the concert has lately increaſed, it is propoſed, that it ſhould be continued for ſeven years, or at leaſt for a much longer time than what was ſpecified in the firſt agreement; thoſe concerned in this memorial, who would wiſh rather to receive and ſpread directions and propoſals on this head, than to be the firſt authors of any, apprehend no inconvenience, for their part, in agreeing to the ſeven years, with the latitude above deſcribed, which reſerves liberty to make ſuch circumſtantial alterations, as may be hereafter found expedient; on the con-

trary, it ſeems of importance, that the labour of ſpreading a concert, which has already extended to ſo diſtant parts, and may, it is hoped, extend farther, may not need to be renewed ſooner, at leaſt much ſooner, as it is uncertain but that may endanger the dropping of it, and it ſeems probable, there will be leſs zeal in ſpreading of it, if the time propoſed for its continuance be too inconſiderable. Mean time, declarations of concurrence for a leſs number of years may greatly promote the good ends in view, tho' it ſeems very expedient, that it ſhould exceed what was firſt agreed on, ſeeing it is found on trial, that that time, inſtead of being too long, was much too ſhort.

7. If perſons who formerly agreed to this concert, ſhould now diſcontinue it, would it not look too like that fainting in prayer, againſt which we are ſo expreſsly warned in ſcripture? And would not this be the more unſuitable at this time, in any within the Britiſh dominions, when they have the united calls of ſuch public chaſtiſements and deliverances, to more concern than ever about public reformation, and conſequently about that which is the ſource of all thorough reformation, the regenerating and

ſanctifying influence of the almighty Spirit of God?

Auguſt 26, 1746.

The miniſter in Boſton afore-mentioned, (to whom moſt of the copies of this memorial were ſent) who, I ſuppoſe, has had later and more full intelligence than I have had, ſays, concerning the propoſal, in a letter— "The motion ſeems to come from above, "and to be wonderfully ſpreading in Scot- "land, England, Wales, Ireland and North "America.

PART II.

Motives to a Compliance with what is propoſed in the Memorial.

I NOW proceed to the ſecond thing intended in this diſcourſe, viz. to offer to conſideration ſome things, which may tend to induce the people of God to comply with the propoſal and requeſt made to them in the Memorial.

And I deſire that the following things may be conſidered:

1. It is evident, from the ſcripture, that there is yet remaining a great advancement of the intereſt of religion, and the kingdom of Chriſt, in this world, by an abundant outpouring of the Spirit of God, far greater and more extenſive than ever yet has been. It is certain, that many things, which are ſpoken concerning a glorious time of the church's enlargement and proſperity, in the latter days, have never yet been fulfilled. There has never yet been any propagation and prevailing of religion, in any wiſe, of that extent and univerſality, which the prophecies

repreſent. It is often foretold and ſignified, in a great variety of ſtrong expreſſions, that there ſhould a time come, when all nations, through the whole habitable world, ſhould embrace the true religion, and be brought into the church of God. It was often promiſed to the patriarchs, that *in their ſeed all the nations*, or, (as it is ſometimes expreſſed) *all the families of the earth ſhould be bleſſed.* Agreeably to this, it is ſaid of the Meſſiah, That *all nations ſhall ſerve him*, and *men ſhall be bleſſed in him, and all nations ſhall call him bleſſed.* And it is ſaid, that *all nations ſhall flow unto the mountain of the houſe of the Lord.* And, that *all nations ſhall be gathered unto the name of the Lord to Jeruſalem, and ſhall walk no more after the imagination of their evil heart.* So it is ſaid, that *all fleſh ſhall come and worſhip before the Lord.* And that *all fleſh ſhould ſee the glory of God together.* And that *all fleſh ſhould come to him that hears prayer.* Chriſt compares the kingdom of heaven, in this world, to leaven, *which a woman took and hid in three meaſures of meal, till the whole was leavened.* It is natural and reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that the whole world ſhould finally be given to Chriſt, as one whoſe right it is to reign, as the proper heir of him who

is originally the king of all nations, and the poſſeſſor of heaven and earth; and the ſcripture teaches us, that God the Father had conſtituted his Son, as God-Man, and in his kingdom of grace, or mediatorial kingdom, to be the *heir of the world*, that he might in this kingdom have *the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmoſt ends of the earth for his poſſeſſion.* Thus Abraham is ſaid to be *the heir of the world*, not in himſelf, but in *his ſeed*, which is Chriſt. And how was this to be fulfilled to Abraham, but by God's fulfilling that great promiſe. that *in his ſeed all the nations of the earth ſhould be bleſſed?* For that promiſe is what the apoſtle is ſpeaking of; which ſhews, that God has appointed Chriſt to be the heir of the world in his kingdom of grace, and to poſſeſs and reign over all nations, through the propagation of his goſpel, and the power of his Spirit communicating the bleſſings of it. God had appointed him to this univerſal dominion by a moſt ſolemn oath: *I have ſworn by myſelf, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteouſneſs, and ſhall not return, that unto me every knee ſhall bow, every tongue ſhall ſwear.* Though this ſolemn oath of God the Father is to be underſtood in ſo comprehenſive a

ſenſe, as to extend to what ſhall be accompliſhed at the day of judgment, yet it is evident by the foregoing and following verſes, that the thing moſt directly intended, is what ſhall be fulfilled by the ſpreading of the goſpel of his ſalvation, and power of the Spirit of grace, bringing *all the ends of the earth to look to him that they may be ſaved*, and come to him for *righteouſneſs and ſtrength* that, *in him they might be juſtified, and might glory*. God has ſuffered many earthly princes to extend their conqueſts over a great part of the face of the earth, and to poſſeſs a dominion of a vaſt extent, and one monarchy to conquer and ſucceed another, the latter being ſtill the greater; it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe that a much greater glory in this reſpect ſhould be reſerved for Chriſt, God's own ſon and rightful heir, who has purchaſed the dominion by ſo great and hard a ſervice; it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that his dominion ſhould be far the largeſt, and his conqueſts vaſtly the greateſt and moſt extenſive. And thus the ſcriptures repreſent the matter, in Nebuchadnezzar's viſion, and the prophet's interpretation, Dan. ii. There the four great monarchies of the earth, one ſucceeding another, are repreſented by *the great image of*

gold, ſilver, braſs, iron and clay; but at laſt *a ſtone, cut out of the mountains without hands, ſmites the image upon his feet, which breaks the iron, clay, braſs, ſilver and gold in pieces, that all becomes as the chaff of the ſummer threſhing floors, and the wind carries them away, that no place is found for them; but the ſtone waxes great, becomes a great mountain, and* FILLS THE WHOLE EARTH; ſignifying the kingdom which the Lord God of heaven ſhould ſet up in the world, laſt of all, which ſhould break in pieces and conſume all other kingdoms. Surely this repreſentation leads us to ſuppoſe, that this laſt kingdom ſhall be of vaſtly greater extent than any of the preceding. The like repreſentation is made in the viith chapter of Daniel; there the four monarchies are repreſented by four great beaſts that aroſe ſucceſſively, one conquering and ſubduing another; the fourth and laſt of theſe is ſaid to be *dreadful* and *terrible,* and *ſtrong exceedingly,* and *to have great iron teeth,* and *to devour and break in pieces, and ſtamp the reſidue with his feet;* yea, it is ſaid, verſe 23, that the kingdom repreſented by this beaſt ſhall *devour the whole earth*; but laſt of all, *one like the Son of Man* appears, *coming to the Ancient of*

Days, and being brought near before him, and receiving of him a dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, THAT ALL PEOPLE, NATIONS AND LANGUAGES *ſhould ſerve him.* This laſt circumſtance, of the vaſt extent and univerſality of his dominion, is manifeſtly ſpoken of as one thing greatly diſtinguiſhing this holy kingdom from all the preceding monarchies; although of one of the former it was ſaid, that it ſhould *devour the whole earth,* yet we are naturally led, both by the much greater emphaſis and ſtrength of the expreſſions, as well as by the whole connexion and tenor of the prophecy, to underſtand the univerſality here expreſſed in a much more extenſive and abſolute ſenſe; and terms uſed in the interpretation of this viſion are ſuch, that ſcarcely any can be deviſed more ſtrong, to ſignify an abſolute univerſality of dominion over the inhabitants of the face of the earth; ver. 27. *And the kingdom, and dominion, and* GREATNESS OF THE KINGDOM UNDER THE WHOLE HEAVEN, *ſhall be given to the people of the moſt high God.* Agreeably to this, the goſpel is repreſented as *preached unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and tongue, and kindred, and people.* The univerſality of the prevalance of true reli-

gion in the latter days, is ſometimes expreſſed by its reaching to *the utmoſt ends of the earth. To all the ends of the earth, and of the world. All the ends of the earth with thoſe that are far off upon the ſea. From the riſing of the ſun to the going down of the ſame. The outgoings of the morning and of the evening.* It ſeems that all the moſt ſtrong expreſſions, that were in uſe among the Jews to ſignify the habitable world in its utmoſt extent, are made uſe of to ſignify the extent of the church of God in the latter days, and in many places a variety of theſe expreſſions are uſed, and there is an accumulation of them, expreſſed with great force.

It would be unreaſonable to ſay, theſe are only bold figures, uſed after the manner of the eaſtern nations, to expreſs the great extent of the Chriſtian church, at and after the days of Conſtantine; to ſay ſo, would be in effect to ſay, that it would have been impoſſible for God, if he had deſired it, plainly to have foretold any thing that ſhould abſolutely have extended to all nations of the earth. I queſtion whether it be poſſible to find out a more ſtrong expreſſion, to ſignify an abſolute univerſality of the knowledge of the true religion through the habitable

world, than that in Isai. xi. 9. *The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord,* AS THE WATERS COVER THE SEAS. Which is as much as to say, as there is no place in the vast ocean where there is not water, so there shall be no part of the world of mankind where there is not the knowledge of the Lord; as there is no part of the wide bed or cavity possessed by the sea, but what is covered with water, so there shall be no part of the habitable world, that shall not be covered by the light of the gospel, and possessed by the true religion. Waters are often in prophecy put for nations and multitudes of people; so the waters of the main ocean seem sometimes to be put for the inhabitants of the earth in general; as in Ezekiel's vision of the waters of the sanctuary which flowed from the sanctuary, and ran east, till they came to the ocean, and were at first a small stream, but continually encreased till they became a great river; and when they came to the sea, the water even of the vast ocean was healed, representing the conversion of the world to the true religion in the latter days.—It seems evident, that the time will come, when there will not be one nation remaining in the world, which

ſhall not embrace the true religion, in that God has expreſsly revealed, that no one ſuch nation ſhall be left ſtanding on the earth; *The nation and kingdom that will not ſerve thee ſhall periſh; yea, thoſe nations ſhall be utterly waſted.*—God has declared that heathen idolatry and all the worſhip of falſe gods ſhall be wholly aboliſhed, in the moſt univerſal manner, ſo that it ſhall be continued in no place under the heavens, or upon the face of the earth; *the gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they ſhall periſh from the earth, and from under theſe heavens. They are vanity, and the work of errors, in the time of their viſitation they ſhall periſh.* This muſt be underſtood as what ſhall be brought to paſs while this earth and theſe heavens remain, *i. e.* before the end of the world. Agreeable to this is that in Iſaiah. *Sing, O barren, and thou that didſt not bear;—for more are the children of the deſolate than the children of the married wife, ſaith the Lord. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them ſtretch forth the curtains of thy habitation; ſpare not; lengthen thy cords, ſtrengthen thy ſtakes. For thy maker is thy huſband; the Lord of Hoſts is his name; and*

thy Redeemer the Holy One of Iſrael; THE GOD OF THE WHOLE EARTH SHALL HE BE CALLED.

The prophecies of the New Teſtament do no leſs evidently ſhew, that a time will come when the goſpel ſhall univerſally prevail, and the kingdom of Chriſt be extended over the whole habitable earth, in the moſt proper ſenſe. Chriſt ſays, *I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.* It is fit, that when the Son of God becomes man, he ſhould have dominion over all mankind: it is fit, that ſince he became an inhabitant of the earth, and ſhed his blood on the earth, he ſhould poſſeſs the whole earth: it is fit, ſeeing here he became a ſervant, and was ſubject to men, and was arraigned before them, and judged, condemned and executed by them, and ſuffered ignominy and death in a moſt public manner, before Jews and Gentiles, being lifted up to view on the croſs upon an hill, near that populous city Jeruſalem, at a moſt public time, when there were many hundred thouſand ſpectators, from all parts, that he ſhould be rewarded with an univerſal dominion over mankind; and it is here declared he ſhall be. The apoſtle, in the xith of Ro-

mans, teaches us to look on that great outpouring of the Spirit and in-gathering of ſouls into Chriſt's kingdom, that was in thoſe days, firſt of the Jews, and then of the Gentiles, to be but as the firſt-fruits of the intended harveſt, both with regard to Jews and Gentiles; and to look on the in-gathering of thoſe firſt fruits as a ſign that all the remainder both of Jews and Gentiles ſhall in due time be gathered in. *For if the firſt-fruit be holy, the lump is alſo holy: and if the root be holy, ſo are the branches.* And in that context, the apoſtle ſpeaks of the FULNESS of both Jews and Gentiles, as what ſhall hereafter be brought in, as diſtinct from that in-gathering from among both, which was in thoſe primitive ages of Chriſtianity; we read of the fulneſs of the Jews, and of the fulneſs of the Gentiles; and the apoſtle teaches us to look upon that infidelity and darkneſs, which firſt prevailed over all Gentile nations, before Chriſt came, and then over the Jews after Chriſt came, as what was wiſely permitted of God, as a preparation for the manifeſtation of the glory of God's mercy, in due time, on the whole world, conſtituted of Jews and Gentiles. God hath concluded them all in unbelief,

that he might have mercy upon all. Theſe things plainly ſhew, that the time is coming when the whole world of mankind ſhall be brought into the church of Chriſt; and not only a part of the Jews, and a part of the Gentile world, as the firſt-fruits, as it was in the firſt ages of the Chriſtian church; but the fulneſs of both, the whole lump, all the nation of the Jews, and all the world of Gentiles.

In the laſt great conflict between the church of Chriſt and her enemies, before the commencement of the glorious time of the church's peace and reſt, the kings of the earth, and the *whole world*, are repreſented as gathered together, and then the ſeventh angel pours out his vial into the air, which limits that kingdom that Satan has, as god of this world, in its utmoſt extent;—and that kingdom is repreſented as utterly overthrown. In another deſcription of that great battle, Chriſt is repreſented as riding forth, having on his head many crowns, and on his veſture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. Which we may well ſuppoſe ſignifies, that he is now going to that conqueſt, whereby he ſhall ſet up a kingdom, in which he ſhall be

king of kings, in a far more extenſive manner than either the Babyloniſh, Perſian, Grecian, or Roman monarchs were. And an angel appears ſtanding in the ſun, that overlooks the whole world, calling on all the fowls that fly in the midſt of heaven, to come and eat the fleſh of kings, &c. And in conſequence of the great victory Chriſt gains at that time, *an angel comes down from heaven, having the key of the bottomleſs pit, and a great chain in his hand, and lays hold on the devil, and binds him, and caſts him into the bottomleſs pit, and ſhuts him up, and ſets a ſeal upon him, that he ſhould deceive the nations no more.* Satan's being diſpoſſeſſed of that higheſt monarchy on earth, the Roman empire, and caſt out, in the time of Conſtantine, is repreſented by his being caſt down from heaven to the earth; but now there is ſomething far beyond that; he is caſt out of the earth, and is ſhut up in hell, and confined to that alone, ſo that he has no place left him in this world of mankind, high or low.

Now will any be ſo unreaſonable as to ſay, that all theſe things do not ſignify more than that one third part of the world ſhould be brought into the church of Chriſt, beyond

which it cannot be pretended that the Chriſtian religion has ever yet reached, in its greateſt extent? Thoſe countries, which belonged to the Roman empire, that were brought to the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, after the reign of Conſtantine, are but a ſmall part of what the habitable world now is; as to extent of ground, they altogether bear, I ſuppoſe, no greater proportion to it, than the land of Canaan did to the Roman empire. —And our Redeemer, in his kingdom of grace, has hitherto poſſeſſed but a little part of the world, in its moſt flouriſhing ſtate, ſince arts are ariſen to their greateſt height, and a very great part of the world is but lately diſcovered, and much remains undiſcovered to this day.

Theſe things make it very evident, that the main fulfilment of thoſe prophecies that ſpeak of the glorious advancement of Chriſt's kingdom on earth, is ſtill to come.

And as there has been nothing as yet, with regard to the flouriſhing of religion, and the advancement of Chriſt's kingdom, of ſuch extent as to anſwer the prophecies, ſo neither has there been any thing of that duration that is foretold. The prophecies ſpeak of Jeruſalem's being made *the joy of the whole*

earth, and alſo the *joy of many generations.* That *God's people ſhould long enjoy the work of their hands.* That they ſhould *reign with Chriſt a thouſand years;* by which we muſt at leaſt underſtand a very long time. But it would be endleſs to mention all the places, which ſignify that the time of the church's great peace and proſperity ſhould be of long continuance: almoſt all the prophecies that ſpeak of her latter-day glory, imply it; and it is implied in very many of them, that when once this day of the church's advancement and peace is begun, it ſhall never end, till the world ends; or, at leaſt, that there ſhall be no more a return of her troubles and adverſity for any conſiderable continuance; that then *the days of her mourning ſhall be ended;* that her tribulations *ſhould then be as the waters of Noah unto God; that as he has ſworn that the waters of Noah ſhould no more paſs over the earth, ſo he will ſwear that he will no more be wroth with his people, or rebuke them;* that *God's people ſhould no more walk after the imagination of their evil heart;* that *God would hide himſelf no more from the houſe of Iſrael, becauſe he has poured out his Spirit upon them;* that *their ſun ſhould no more go down, nor the moon withdraw itſelf;*

that *the light ſhould not be clear and dark;* (i. e. there ſhould be no more an interchange of light and darkneſs, as uſed to be) but that it *ſhould be all one continued day; not day and night,* (for ſo the words are in the original in Zech. xiv. 7.) alternately, *but it ſhall come to paſs, that at evening-time* (i. e. at the time that night and darkneſs uſed to be) *it ſhall be light;* and that *the nations ſhould beat their ſwords into plow-ſhares, and their ſpears into pruning-hooks; and that nation ſhall not lift up ſword againſt nation, nor learn war any more;* but that there *ſhould be abundance of peace ſo long as the moon endureth.* And innumerable things of this nature are declared.

But the church of Chriſt has never yet enjoyed a ſtate of peace and proſperity for any long time; on the contrary, the times of her reſt, and of the flouriſhing ſtate of religion, have ever been very ſhort. Hitherto the church may ſay, *Return, for thy ſervants' ſake, the tribes of thine inheritance; the people of thy holineſs have poſſeſſed it but a little while.* The quietneſs that the church of God enjoyed after the beginning of Conſtantine's reign was very ſhort; the peace the empire enjoyed, in freedom from war, was not more

than twenty years; no longer nor greater than it had enjoyed under ſome of the heathen emperors. After this the empire was rent in pieces by inteſtine wars, and waſted almoſt every where by the invaſions and incurſions of barbarous nations, and the Chriſtian world was ſoon all in contention and confuſion, by hereſies and diviſions in matters of religion. And the church of Chriſt has never as yet been for any long time, free from perſecution; eſpecially when truth has prevailed, and true religion flouriſhed. It is manifeſt, that hitherto the people of God have been kept under, and Zion has been in a low afflicted ſtate, and her enemies have had the chief ſway.

And another thing that makes it exceeding manifeſt, that that day of the church's greateſt advancement on earth, which is foretold in ſcripture, has never yet come, is that, it is ſo plainly and expreſsly revealed that this day ſhould ſucceed the laſt of the four monarchies, even the Roman, in its laſt ſtate, wherein it is divided into ten kingdoms, and after the deſtruction of Antichriſt, ſignified by the little horn, whoſe reign is contemporary with the reign of the ten kings. Theſe

things are very plain in the ſecond and ſeventh chapters of Daniel, and alſo in the Revelation of St. John. And it is alſo plain by the ninth chapter of Romans, that it ſhall be after the national converſion of the Jews, which ſhall be as life from the dead to the Gentiles, and the fulneſs of both Jews and Gentiles ſhould be come in, and all the nation of the Jews, and all other nations, ſhall obtain mercy, and there ſhall be that general in-gathering of the harveſt of the whole earth, of which all that had been converted before, either of Jews or Gentiles, were but the firſt fruits. And many other evidences of this point might be mentioned, which for brevity's ſake I omit.

And thus it is meet, that the laſt kingdom which ſhall take place on earth, ſhould be the kingdom of God's own Son and heir, whoſe right it is to rule and reign; and that whatever revolutions and confuſions there may be in the world, for a long time, the cauſe of truth, the righteous cauſe, ſhould finally prevail, and God's holy people ſhould at laſt inherit the earth, and reign on earth; and that the world ſhould continue in tumults, and great revolutions, following one another, from age to age, the world being,

as it were, in travail, till truth and holineſs are brought forth; that all things ſhould be ſhaken, till that comes which is true and right, and agreeable to the mind of God, which cannot be ſhaken; and that the wiſdom of the ruler of the world ſhould be manifeſted in the bringing all things ultimately to ſo good an iſſue. The world is made for the Son of God; his kingdom is the end of all changes that come to paſs in the ſtate of the world of mankind; all are only to prepare the way for this; it is fit therefore that the laſt kingdom on earth ſhould be his.— It is wiſely and mercifully ordered of God that it ſhould be ſo, on this account, as well as many others, viz. that the church of God, under all preceding changes, ſhould have this conſideration to encourage her, and maintain her hope, and animate her faith and prayers, from generation to generation, that God has promiſed, her cauſe ſhould finally be maintained and prevail in this world.

Let it now be conſidered,

2. The future promiſed advancement of the kingdom of Chriſt is an event unſpeakably happy and glorious. The ſcriptures ſpeak of that time, as a time wherein God and his Son Jeſus Chriſt will be moſt emi-

nently glorified on earth; a time, wherein God, who till then had dwelt between the cherubims, and concealed himſelf in the holy of holies, in the ſecret of his tabernacle, behind the veil, in the thick darkneſs, ſhould openly ſhine forth, and all fleſh ſhould ſee his glory, and God's people in general have as great a privilege as the high prieſt alone had once a year, or as Moſes had in the mount; a time, wherein *the temple of God in heaven ſhould be opened, and there ſhould be ſeen the ark of his teſtament;* a time, wherein both God will be greatly glorified, and his ſaints made unſpeakably happy in the view of his glory; a time, wherein God's people ſhould not only once ſee the light of God's glory, as Moſes, or ſee it once a year with the high prieſt, but ſhould dwell and walk continually in it, and it ſhould be their conſtant daily light, inſtead of the light of the ſun, which light ſhould be ſo much more glorious than the light of the ſun or moon, that *the moon ſhall be confounded, and the ſun aſhamed, when the Lord of Hoſts ſhould reign in Mount Zion, and in Jeruſalem, before his ancients glorioufly.*

It is repreſented as a time of vaſt increaſe of knowledge and underſtanding, eſpecially

in divine things; a time, wherein God would *deſtroy the face of the covering caſt over all people, and the veil ſpread over all nations;* wherein *the light of the moon ſhall be as the light of the ſun, and the light of the ſun ſeven-fold. And the eyes of them that ſee ſhall not be dim, and the heart of the raſh ſhall underſtand knowledge. And they ſhall no more teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, ſaying, Know the Lord, becauſe they ſhall all know him from the leaſt to the greateſt.* A time of general holineſs. *Thy people ſhall be all righteous.* A time of great prevailing of eminent holineſs, when little children ſhould, in ſpiritual attainments, be as though they were *a hundred years old.* Wherein *he that is feeble among God's people ſhould be as David.* A time wherein holineſs ſhould be, as it were, inſcribed on evething, on all mens' common buſineſs and employments, and the common utenſils of life, all ſhall be dedicated to God, and improved to holy purpoſes. *Her merchandize and hire ſhall be holineſs to the Lord. In that day ſhall there be upon the bells of the horſes,* HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; *and the pots in the Lord's houſe ſhall be like the bowls before the altar; yea, every pot in Jeruſalem and in Judah ſhall*

be holineſs unto the Lord of Hoſts. A time wherein religion and true Chriſtianity ſhall, in every reſpect, be uppermoſt in the world; wherein God will cauſe his church to *ariſe and ſhake herſelf from the duſt, and put on her beautiful garments, and ſit down on a throne;* and *the poor ſhall be raiſed from the duſt, and the beggar from the dunghill, and ſhall be ſet among princes, and made to inherit the throne of God's glory.* A time wherein vital piety ſhall take poſſeſſion of thrones and palaces, and thoſe that are in moſt exalted ſtations ſhall be eminent in holineſs. *And kings ſhall be thy nurſing fathers, and their queens thy nurſing mothers. Thou ſhalt ſuck the breaſts of kings. The daughter of Tyre ſhall be there with a gift, the rich among the people ſhall entreat thy favour.* A time of wonderful union, and the moſt univerſal peace, love and ſweet harmony, wherein the nations ſhall beat their ſwords into plow-ſhares, &c. and God will *cauſe wars to ceaſe to the ends of the earth, and break the bow, and cut the ſpear in ſunder, and burn the chariot in the fire; and the mountains ſhall bring forth peace to God's people, and the little hills by righteouſneſs;* wherein *the wolf ſhould dwell with the lamb,* &c. and wherein *God's people ſhall dwell in a peaceable habita-*

tion, and in ſure dwellings, and quiet reſting places. A time wherein all hereſies, and falſe doctrines ſhall be exploded, and the church of God ſhall not be rent with a variety of jarring opinions. *The Lord ſhall be king over all the earth; in that day there ſhall be one Lord and his name one.* And all ſuperſtitious ways of worſhip ſhall be aboliſhed, and all agree in worſhipping God in his own appointed way, and agreeable to the purity of his inſtitutions. *I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them and their children after them.* A time wherein the whole earth ſhall be united as one holy city, one heavenly family, men of all nations ſhall as it were dwell together, and ſweetly correſpond one with another as brethren and children of the ſame father; as the prophecies often ſpeak of all God's people at that time as the children of God, and brethren one to another, all appointing over them one head, gathered to one houſe of God, to worſhip the king, the Lord of Hoſts.—A time wherein this whole great ſociety ſhall appear in glorious beauty, in genuine amiable chriſtianity, and excellent order, as a city compact together, the perfection of beauty, and eter-

nal excellency, ſhining with a reflection of the glory of Jehovah riſen upon it, which ſhall be attractive and raviſhing to all kings and nations, and it ſhall appear as a bride adorned for her huſband.—A time of great temporal proſperity; of great health. *The inhabitant ſhall not ſay, I am ſick. As the days of a tree, are the days of my people.* A time wherein the earth ſhall be abundantly fruitful. A time wherein the world ſhall be delivered from that multitude of ſore calamities that before had prevailed, and there ſhall be an univerſal bleſſing of God upon mankind, in ſoul and body, and in all their concerns, and all manner of tokens of God's preſence and favour, and *God ſhall rejoice over them, as the bridegroom rejoiceth over his bride, and the mountains ſhall as it were drop down new wine, and the hills ſhall flow with milk.* A time of great and univerſal joy throughout the earth, when *from the utmoſt ends of the earth ſhall be heard ſongs, even glory to the righteous, and God's people ſhall with joy draw water out of the well of ſalvation, and God ſhall prepare in his holy mountain, a feaſt of fat things, a feaſt of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined,* which feaſt is repre-

ſented, as *the marriage ſupper of the Lamb.* Yea, the ſcriptures repreſent it not only as a time of univerſal joy on earth, but extraordinary joy in heaven, among the angels and ſaints, the holy apoſtles and prophets there. Yea, the ſcriptures repreſent it as a time of extraordinary rejoicing with Chriſt himſelf, the glorious head, in whom all things in heaven and earth ſhall then be gathered together in one. *The Lord thy God in the midſt of thee is mighty; he will ſave; he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will reſt in his love; he will joy over thee with ſinging.* And the very fields, trees and mountains ſhall then, as it were, rejoice, and break forth into ſinging. *Ye ſhall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills ſhall break forth before you into ſinging, and all the trees of the field ſhall clap their hands.— Sing, O heavens, for the Lord hath done it; ſhout, ye lower parts of the earth; break forth into ſinging, ye mountains; O foreſt, and every tree therein; for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himſelf in Iſrael.*

Such being the ſtate of things in this future promiſed glorious day of the church's proſperity, ſurely it is worth praying for,

Nor is there any one thing whatſoever, if we viewed things aright, which a regard to the glory of God, a concern for the kingdom and honour of our Redeemer, a love to his people, pity to periſhing ſinners, love to our fellow-creatures in general, compaſſion to mankind under its various and ſore calamities and miſeries, a deſire of their temporal and ſpritual proſperity, love to our country, our neighbours and friends, yea, and to our own ſouls, would diſpoſe us to be ſo much in prayer for, as for the dawning of this happy day, and the accompliſhment of that glorious event.

It may be worthy to be conſidered,

3. How much Chriſt prayed and laboured and ſuffered, in order to the glory and happineſs of that day.

The ſum of the bleſſings Chriſt fought, by what he did and ſuffered in the work of redemption, was the Holy Spirit. So is the affair of our redemption conſtituted; the Father provides and gives the Redeemer, and the price of redemption is offered to him, and he grants the benefit purchaſed; the Son is the redeemer who gives the price, and alſo is the price offered; and the Holy Spirit is the grand bleſſing obtained by the

price offered, and beſtowed on the redeemed. The Holy Spirit, in his in-dwelling, his influences and fruits, is the ſum of all grace, holineſs, comfort and joy; or in one word, of all the ſpiritual good Chriſt purchaſed for men in this world; and is alſo the ſum of all perfection, glory and eternal joy, that he purchaſed for them in another world. The Holy Spirit is that great benefit, which is the ſubject-matter of the promiſes, both of the eternal covenant of redemption, and alſo of the covenant of grace; the grand ſubject of the promiſes of the Old Teſtament, in the prophecies of the bleſſings of the Meſſiah's kingdom; and the chief ſubject of the promiſes of the New Teſtament; and particularly of the covenant of grace delivered by Jeſus Chriſt to his diſciples, as his laſt will and teſtament, in the xiv. xv. and xvi. chapters of John; the grand legacy that he bequeathed to them, in that his laſt and dying diſcourſe with them. Therefore the Holy Spirit is ſo often called the ſpirit of promiſe, and emphatically, the promiſe, the promiſe of the Father, &c. This being the great bleſſing Chriſt purchaſed by his labours and ſufferings on earth, it was the bleſſing he received of the Father, when he aſcended

into heaven, and entered into the holy of holies with his own blood, to communicate to thoſe that he had redeemed. *It is expedient for you, that I go away; for if I go not away, the comforter will not come; but if I depart, I will ſend him unto you. Being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt, he hath ſhed forth this which ye now ſee and hear.* This is the ſum of thoſe gifts, which Chriſt received for men, even for the rebellious, at his aſcenſion. This is the ſum of the benefits Chriſt obtains for men by his interceſſion. *I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever—even the ſpirit of truth.* Herein conſiſts Chriſt's communicative fulneſs, even in his being full of the Spirit, and ſo full of grace and truth, that we might of this fulneſs receive, and grace for grace. He is anointed with the Holy Ghoſt; and this is the ointment that goes down from the head to the members. God gives the Spirit not by meaſure unto him, that every one that is his might receive according to the meaſure of the gift of Chriſt. This, therefore, was the great bleſſing he prayed for in that wonderful prayer, that he uttered for

his disciples, and all his future church, the evening before he died. The blessing he prayed for to the Father, in behalf of his disciples, was the same he had insisted on in his preceding discourse with them; and this, doubtless, was the blessing he prayed for when, as our High Priest, he offered up strong crying and tears with his blood. The same that he shed his blood for, he also shed tears for, and poured out prayers for.

But the time that we have been speaking of, is the chief time of the bestowment of this blessing—the main season of the success of all that Christ did and suffered in the work of our redemption. Before this the Spirit of God is given but very sparingly, and but few are saved; but then it will be far otherwise; wickedness shall be rare then, as virtue and piety had been before; and, undoubtedly, by far the greatest number of them that ever receive the benefits of Christ's redemption, from the beginning of the world to the end of it, will receive it in that time. The number of the inhabitants of the earth will, doubtless, then be vastly multiplied, and the number of redeemed ones much more. If we should suppose that glorious day to last no more than (literally) a thou-

ſand years, and that at the beginning of that thouſand years the world of mankind ſhould be but juſt as numerous as it is now, and that the number ſhould be doubled, during that time of great health and peace, and the univerſal bleſſing of heaven, once only in an hundred years, the number at the end of the thouſand years would be more than a thouſand times greater than it is now; and if it ſhould be doubled once in fifty years, (which probably the number of inhabitants of New-England has ordinarily been, in about half that time) then at the end of the thouſand years, there would be more than a million inhabitants on the face of the earth, where there is one now. And there is reaſon to think, that through the greater part of this period, at leaſt, the number of ſaints will, in their increaſe, bear a proportion to the increaſe of the number of inhabitants. And it muſt be conſidered, that if the number of mankind at the beginning of this period be no more than equal to the preſent number, yet we may doubtleſs conclude, that the number of true ſaints will be immenſely greater, when inſtead of the few true and thorough Chriſtians now in ſome few countries, every nation on the face of the whole

earth ſhall be converted to Chriſtianity, and every country ſhall be full of true Chriſtians, ſo that the ſucceſſive multiplication of true ſaints through the thouſand years, will begin with that vaſt advantage, beyond the multiplication of mankind; where the latter is begun from units, the other, doubtleſs, will begin with hundreds, if not thouſands. How much greater then will be the number of true converts, that will be brought to a participation of the benefits of Chriſt's redemption, during that period, than in all other times put together? I think, the foregoing things conſidered, we ſhall be very moderate in our conjectures, if we ſay, it is probable that there will be an hundred thouſand times more, that will actually be redeemed to God by Chriſt's blood, during that period of the church's proſperity that we have been ſpeaking of, than ever had been before, from the beginning of the world to that time.

That time is repreſented in ſcripture, as the proper appointed ſeaſon of Chriſt's ſalvation; eminently the elect ſeaſon, the accepted time and day of ſalvation, the year of Chriſt's redeemed. This period is ſpoken of as the proper time of the dominion of the

Redeemer, and reign of his redeeming love, in the ſecond and ſeventh chapters of Daniel, and many other places; the proper time of his harveſt, or in-gathering of his fruits from this fallen world; the appointed day of his triumph over Satan, the great deſtroyer, and the appointed day of his marriage with his elect ſpouſe. The time given to the Sun of Righteouſneſs to rule, as the day is the time God has appointed for the natural ſun to bear rule; therefore the bringing on of this time is called *Chriſt's coming in his kingdom*, wherein *he will rent the heavens and come down*, and *the Sun of Righteouſneſs ſhall ariſe.*

The comparatively little ſaving good there is in the world, as the fruit of Chriſt's redemption, before that time, is, as it were, granted by way of anticipation; as we anticipate ſomething of the ſun's light by reflection before the day-time, the proper time of the ſun's rule; and as the firſt-fruits are gathered before the harveſt: Then more eſpecially will be the fulfilment of thoſe great promiſes, made by God the Father to the Son, for his pouring out his ſoul unto death; then *ſhall he ſee his ſeed, and the pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hand;* then *ſhall*

he ſee of the travail of his ſoul, and be ſatisfied, and ſhall juſtify many by his knowledge; then *will God divide him a portion with the great, and he ſhall divide the ſpoil with the ſtrong;* then ſhall Chriſt, in an eminent manner, obtain his choſen ſpouſe, that *he loved and died for, that he might ſanctify and cleanſe her, with the waſhing of water, by the word, and preſent her to himſelf, a glorious church.* He will obtain *the joy that was ſet before him, for which he endured the croſs, and deſpiſed the ſhame,* chiefly in the events and conſequences of that day: That day, as was obſerved before, is often repreſented as eminently the time of the rejoicing of the bridegroom. The fore-knowledge and conſideration of it was what ſupported him, and that which his ſoul exulted in, at a time when his ſoul had been troubled at the view of his approaching ſufferings; as may be ſeen in John xii. 23, 24, 27, 31, 32.

Now, therefore, if it be ſo, that this is what Jeſus Chriſt, our great Redeemer and the Head of the Church, did ſo much deſire, and ſet his heart upon, from all eternity, and which he did and ſuffered ſo much for, offering up ſtrong crying and tears, and his

precious blood, to obtain it; ſurely his diſciples and members ſhould alſo earneſtly ſeek it, and be much and earneſt in prayer for it.

Let it be conſidered,

4. The whole creation is, as it were, earneſtly waiting for that day, and conſtantly groaning and travailing in pain to bring forth the felicity and glory of it. For that day is above all other times, excepting the day of judgment, the day of the manifeſtation of the ſons of God, and of their glorious liberty; and, therefore, that elegant repreſentation the apoſtle makes of the earneſt expectation and travail of the creation, in Rom. viii. 19—22 is applicable to the glorious event of this day. *The earneſt expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifeſtation of the ſons of God. For the creature was made ſubject to vanity, not willingly, but by reaſon of him who hath ſubjected the ſame in hope. Becauſe the creature itſelf alſo ſhall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.*— The viſible world has now, for many ages,

been ſubjected to ſin, and made, as it were, a ſervant to it, through the abuſive improvement that man, who has the dominion over the creatures, puts the creatures to. Thus the ſun is a ſort of ſervant to all manner of wickedneſs, as its light, and other beneficial influences are abuſed by men, and made ſubſervient to their luſts and ſinful purpoſes. So of the rain, and fruits of the earth, and the brute animals, and all other parts of the viſible creation; they all ſerve mens' corruption, and obey their ſinful will; and God doth, in a ſort, ſubject them to it, for he continues his influence and power to make them to be obedient, according to the ſame law of nature, whereby they yield to mens' command when uſed to good purpoſes. It is by the immediate influence of God upon things, acting upon them, according to thoſe conſtant methods which we call the laws of nature, that they are ever obedient to mens' will, or that we can uſe them at all. This influence God continues to make them obedient to mens' will though wicked; which is a ſure ſign that the preſent ſtate of things is not laſting, it is confuſion, and God would not ſuffer it to be, but that he deſigns, in a little time, to put an end to it, when it ſhall

no more be ſo. Seeing it is to be but a little while, God chuſes rather to ſubject the creature to man's wickedneſs, than to diſturb and interrupt the courſe of nature according to its ſtated laws; but it is, as it were, a force upon the creature; for the creature is abuſed in it, perverted to far meaner purpoſes than thoſe for which the author of its nature made it, and to which he adapted it. The creature, therefore, is, as it were, unwillingly ſubject, and would not be ſubject, but that it is but for a ſhort time, and it, as it were, hopes for an alteration. It is a bondage the creature is ſubject to, from which it was partly delivered when Chriſt came, and the goſpel was promulgated in the world, and will be more fully delivered at the commencement of the glorious day we are ſpeaking of, and perfectly at the day of judgment. This agrees with the context, for the apoſtle was ſpeaking of the preſent ſuffering ſtate of the church. The reaſon why the church in this world is in a ſuffering ſtate, is, that the world is ſubjected to the ſin and corruption of mankind. By vanity, in ſcripture, is very commonly meant ſin and wickedneſs, and alſo by corruption, as might be ſhewn in many places would my intended brevity allow.

Though the creature is thus ſubject to vanity, yet it does not reſt in this ſubjection, but is conſtantly acting and exerting itſelf, in order to that glorious liberty that God has appointed at the time we are ſpeaking of, and, as it were, reaching forth towards it. All the changes that are brought to paſs in the world, from age to age, are ordered by infinite wiſdom, in one reſpect or other, to prepare the way for that glorious iſſue of things, that ſhall be when truth and righteouſneſs ſhall finally prevail, and he, whoſe right it is, ſhall take the kingdom. All the creatures, in all their operations and motions, continually tend to this; as in a clock, all the motions of the whole ſyſtem of wheels and movements, tend to the ſtriking of the hammer at the appointed time. All the revolutions and reſtleſs motions of the ſun and and other heavenly bodies, from day to day, from year to year, and from age to age, are continually tending thither; as all the many turnings of the wheels of a chariot, in a journey, tend to the appointed journey's end.—The mighty ſtruggles and conflicts of nations, and ſhakings of kingdoms, and thoſe vaſt ſucceſſive changes that are brought to paſs, in

the kingdoms and empires of the world, from one age to another, are, as it were, travail-pangs of the creation, in order to bring forth this glorious event. And the ſcriptures repreſent the laſt ſtruggles and changes that ſhall immediately precede this event, as being the greateſt of all—as the laſt pangs of a woman in travail are the moſt violent.

The creature thus earneſtly expecting this glorious manifeſtation and liberty of the children of God, and travailing in pain in order to it, therefore the ſcriptures, by a like figure, do very often repreſent, that when this ſhall be accompliſhed, the whole inanimate creation ſhall greatly rejoice: That *the heavens ſhall ſing, the earth be glad, the mountains break forth into ſinging, the hills be joyful together, the trees clap their hands, the lower parts of the earth ſhout, the ſea roar and the fulneſs thereof, and the floods clap their hands.*

All the intelligent elect creation, all God's holy creatures in heaven and earth, are truly and properly waiting for, and earneſtly expecting that event. It is abundantly repreſented in ſcripture as the ſpirit and character of all true ſaints, that they ſet their hearts upon, love, long, wait and pray for

the promiſed glory of that day; they are ſpoken of as thoſe that *prefer Jeruſalem to their chief joy; that take pleaſure in the ſtones of Zion, and favour the duſt thereof; that wait for the conſolation of Iſrael.* It is the language of the church of God, and the breathing of the ſoul of every true ſaint, that we have in Pſal. xiv. 7. *O that the ſalvation of Iſrael were come out of Zion! when the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob ſhall rejoice, and Iſrael ſhall be glad.* Agreeably to this was the ſpirit of old Jacob, which he expreſſed when he was dying, in faith in the great promiſe made to him and Iſaac and Abraham, that *in their ſeed all the families of the earth ſhould be bleſſed. I have waited for thy ſalvation, O Lord.* The ſame is repreſented as the ſpirit of his true children, or the family of Jacob. *I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth himſelf from the houſe of Jacob, and I will look for him.—They that love Chriſt's appearing,* is a name that the apoſtle gives to true chriſtians.

The glorious inhabitants of the heavenly world, the ſaints and angels there, that rejoice when one ſinner repents, are earneſtly waiting, in an aſſured and joyful depend-

ance on God's promiſes of that converſion of the world, and marriage of the Lamb, which ſhall be when that glorious day comes; and therefore they are repreſented as all with one accord rejoicing and praiſing God with ſuch mighty exultation and triumph, when it is accomliſhed, in Rom. xix.

5. The word of God is full of precepts, encouragements and examples, tending to excite and induce the people of God to be much in prayer for this mercy.

The ſpirit of God is the chief of the bleſſings that are the ſubject-matter of chriſtian prayer; for it is the ſum of all ſpiritual bleſſings; which are thoſe that we need infinitely more than others; and are thoſe wherein our true and eternal happineſs conſiſts.—That which is the ſum of the bleſſings that Chriſt purchaſed, is the ſum of the bleſſings that Chriſtians have to pray for; but that, as was obſerved before, is the Holy Spirit; and therefore when the diſciples came to Chriſt, and deſired him to teach them to pray, Luke xi. he accordingly gave them particular directions for the performance of this duty;—the concluſion of his whole diſcourſe, in the 13th verſe, plainly ſhews that the Holy Spirit is the ſum of the bleſſings

that are the ſubject-matter of that prayer about which he had inſtructed them. *If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more ſhall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that aſk him?* From which words of Chriſt we may alſo obſerve, that there is no bleſſing that we have ſo great encouragement to pray for, as the Spirit of God; the words imply, that our heavenly Father is eſpecially ready to beſtow his Holy Spirit on them that aſk him. Of the more excellent nature any benefit is, which we ſtand in need of, the more ready God is to beſtow it in anſwer to prayer. The infinite goodneſs of God's nature is the more gratified, and the grand deſign and aim of the contrivance and work of our redemption, is the more anſwered, and Jeſus Chriſt the Redeemer has the greater ſucceſs in his undertaking and labours; and thoſe deſires that are expreſſed in prayer for the moſt excellent bleſſings are the moſt excellent deſires, and conſequently ſuch as God moſt approves of, and is moſt ready to gratify.

The ſcriptures do not only direct and encourage us in general to pray for the Holy Spirit above all things elſe, but it is the ex-

preſsly revealed will of God, that his church ſhould be very much in prayer for that glorious out-pouring of the Spirit that is to be in the latter days, and the things that ſhall be accompliſhed by it. God ſpeaking of that bleſſed event, Ezek. xxxvi. under the figure of *cleanſing the houſe of Iſrael from all their iniquities, planting and building their waſte and ruined places, and making them to become like the garden of Eden, and filling them with men like a flock, like the holy flock, the flock of Jeruſalem in her ſolemn feaſts*; wherein he, doubtleſs, has reſpect to the ſame glorious reſtoration and advancement of his church that is ſpoken of in the next chapter, and in all the following chapters to the end of the book, he ſays, ver. 37. *Thus ſaith the Lord, I will yet for this be enquired of by the houſe of Iſrael, to do it for them.* Which, doubtleſs, implies, that it is the will of God that extraordinary prayerfulneſs in his people for this mercy ſhould precede the beſtowment of it.

I know of no place in the Bible, where ſo ſtrong an expreſſion is made uſe of to ſignify importunity in prayer, as is uſed in Iſai. lxii. 6, 7. where the people of God are called upon to be importunate for this mercy:

Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not ſilence, and give him no reſt, till he eſtabliſh, and till he make Jeruſalem a praiſe in the earth. How ſtrong is the phraſe? And how loud is this call to the church of God, to be fervent and inceſſant in their cries to him for this great mercy? How wonderful are the words to be uſed, concerning the manner in which ſuch worms of the duſt ſhould addreſs the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity? And what encouragement is here, to approach the mercy-ſeat with the greateſt freedom, boldneſs, earneſtneſs, conſtancy, and full aſſurance of faith, to ſeek of God this greateſt thing that can be ſought in chriſtian prayer?

It is a juſt obſervation of a certain eminent miniſter of the church of Scotland, in a diſcourſe of his, on ſocial prayer, in which, ſpeaking of pleading for the ſucceſs of the goſpel, as required by the Lord's prayer, he ſays, "That notwithſtanding of its being ſo "compendious, yet the one half of it, that "is, three petitions in ſix, and theſe the firſt "preſcribed, do all relate to this great caſe; "ſo that to put up any one of theſe petiti-"ons apart, or all of them together, is upon "the matter, to pray that the diſpenſation

" of the gospel may be blessed with divine " power." That glorious day we are speaking of is the proper and appointed time, above all others, for the bringing to pass the things requested in each of these petitions; as the prophecies every where represent that as the time, which God has especially appointed for the hallowing or glorifying his own great name in this world, causing *his glory to be revealed, that all flesh may see it together*, causing it *openly to be manifested in the sight of the heathen*, filling the whole world with the light of his glory to such a degree, that *the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed* before that brighter glory; the appointed time for the glorifying and magnifying the name of Jesus Christ, causing *every knee to bow, and every tongue to confess to him.* This is the proper time *of God's kingdom's coming*, or of *Christ's coming in his kingdom:* that is the very time foretold in the iid of Daniel, when the *Lord God of heaven shall set up a kingdom*, in the latter times of the last monarchy, when it is divided into ten kingdoms; and that is the very time foretold in the viith of Daniel, when there should be *given to One like to the Son of Man, dominion, glory, and a kingdom, that all peo-*

ple, nations, and languages, ſhould ſerve him; and the kingdom and dominion, and the greatneſs of the kingdom under the whole heaven ſhall be given to the people of the ſaints of the moſt high God, after the deſtruction of the *little horn,* that ſhould continue *for a time, times, and the dividing of time.* And that is the time wherein *God's will ſhall be done on earth, as it is done in heaven;* when heaven ſhall, as it were, be bowed, and come down to the earth, as *God's people ſhall be all righteous, and holineſs to the Lord ſhall be written on the bells of the horſes,* &c. So that the three firſt petitions of the Lord's prayer are, in effect, no other than requeſts for the bringing on this glorious day.—And as the Lord's prayer begins with aſking for this, in the three firſt petitions, ſo it concludes with it, in theſe words, *For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever. Amen.* Which words imply a requeſt, that God would take to himſelf his great power, and reign, and manifeſt his power and glory in the world. Thus Chriſt teaches us, that it becomes his diſciples to ſeek this above all other things, and make it the firſt and the laſt in their prayers, and that every petition ſhould be put up in a ſubordination to the

advancement of God's kingdom and glory in the world.

Beſides what has been obſerved of the Lord's prayer, if we look through the whole Bible, and obſerve all the examples of prayer that we find there recorded, we ſhall not find ſo many prayers for any other mercy, as for the deliverance, reſtoration, and proſperity of the church, and the advancement of God's glory and kingdom of grace in the world. If we well conſider the prayers that we find recorded in the book of Pſalms, I believe we ſhall ſee reaſon to think, that a very great, if not the greater part of them, are prayers uttered, either in the name of Chriſt, or in the name of the church, for ſuch a mercy; and undoubtedly, the greateſt part of that book of Pſalms, is made up of prayers for this mercy, prophecies of it, and prophetical praiſes for it.

The prophets, in their prophecies of the reſtoration and advancement of the church, very often ſpeak of it as what ſhall be done in anſwer to the prayers of God's people. Iſai. xxv. 9.—xxvi. 9, 12, 13, 16, 17. to the end. Chap. xxxiii. 2. Pſal. cii. 13—22. Jer. iii. 21. Iſai. lxv. 24.—xli. 17. Hoſ. v. 15. with vi. 1, 2, 3. and xiv. 2. to the

end.—Zech. x. 6.—xii. x. and xiii. 9. Isai. lv. 6. with ver. 12, 13. Jer. xxxiii. 3. The prophecies of future glorious times of the church, are often introduced with a prayer of the church for her deliverance and advancement, prophetically uttered, as in Isai. li. 9, &c. Chap. lxiii. 11. to the end, and lxiv. throughout.

In order to Christ's being mystically born into the world, in the advancement and flourishing of true religion, and great increase of the number of true converts who are spoken of as having Christ formed in them, the scriptures represent it as requisite, that the church should first be in travail, crying, and pained to be delivered. And one thing that we have good reason to understand by it, is her exercising strong desires, and wrestling and agonizing with God in prayer for this event; because we find such figures of speech used in this sense elsewhere. *My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you. Lord, in trouble have they visited thee; they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them. Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and cryeth out in her pangs, so have we been in thy sight, O*

Lord. And certainly it is fit, that the church of God ſhould be in travail for that, which (as I before obſerved) the whole creation travails in pain for.

The ſcriptures do not only abundantly manifeſt it to be the duty of God's people to be much in prayer for this great mercy, but they alſo abound with manifold conſiderations to encourage them in it, and animate them with hopes of ſucceſs. There is, perhaps, no one thing that ſo much of the Bible is taken up in the promiſes of, in order to encourage the faith, hope, and prayers of the ſaints as this, which at once affords to God's people the cleareſt evidences that it is their duty to be much in prayer for this mercy, (for, undoubtedly, that which God does abundantly make the ſubject of his promiſes, God's people ſhould abundantly make the ſubject of their prayers) and alſo affords them the ſtrongeſt aſſurances that their prayers ſhall be ſucceſsful. With what confidence may we go before God, and pray for that, of which we have ſo many exceeding precious and glorious promiſes to plead? The very firſt promiſe of God to fallen man, even that *it ſhall bruiſe thy head*, is a promiſe which is to have its chief fulfilment at

that day; and the whole Bible concludes with a promiſe of the glory of that day, and a prayer for its fulfilment. *He that teſtifieth theſe things, ſaith—Surely, I come quickly—Amen. Even ſo, come, Lord Jeſus.*

The ſcripture gives us great reaſon to think, that when once there comes to appear much of a ſpirit of prayer in the church of God for this mercy, then it will ſoon be accompliſhed. It is evidently with reference to this mercy, that God makes that promiſe, *When the poor and needy ſeek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirſt, I, the Lord, will hear them; I, the God of Iſrael, will not forſake them; I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midſt of the vallies; I will make the wilderneſs a pool of water, and the dry land ſprings of water; I will plant in the wilderneſs the cedar, the ſhittah-tree, and the myrtle, and the oil-tree; I will ſet in the deſart the fir-tree, the pine, and the box-tree together.* Spiritual waters and rivers are explained by the apoſtle John, to be the Holy Spirit. It is now a time of ſcarcity of theſe ſpiritual waters; there are, as it were, none: If God's people, in this time of great drought, were but made duly

ſenſible of this calamity, and their own emptineſs and neceſſity, and brought earneſtly to thirſt and cry for needed ſupplies, God would, doubtleſs, ſoon fulfil this bleſſed promiſe.—We have another promiſe much like this, in Pſal. cii. 16, 17. *When the Lord ſhall build up Zion, he ſhall appear in his glory; he will regard the prayer of the deſtitute, and not deſpiſe their prayer.* And remarkable are the words that follow in the next verſe: *This ſhall be written for the generation to come; and the people which ſhall be created ſhall praiſe the Lord.* Which ſeems to ſignify, that this promiſe ſhall be left on record to encourage ſome future generation of God's people to pray and cry earneſtly for this mercy, to whom he would fulfil the promiſe, and thereby give them, and great multitudes of others, that ſhould be converted through their prayers, occaſion to praiſe his name. Who knows but that the generation here ſpoken of, may be this preſent generation? One thing mentioned in the character of that future generation, is certainly true concerning the preſent, viz. That it is deſtitute; the church of God is in very low, ſorrowful and needy circumſtances; and if the next thing, there ſuppoſed, were alſo verified in us, viz.

That we were made ſenſible of our great calamity, and brought to cry earneſtly to God for help, I am perſuaded that the third would be alſo verified, viz. That our prayers would be turned into joyful praiſes, for God's gracious anſwers of our prayers. It is ſpoken of as a ſign and evidence, that the time to favour Zion is come, when God's ſervants are brought, by their prayerfulneſs for her reſtoration, in an eminent manner, to ſhew that *they favour her ſtones and duſt. Thou ſhalt ariſe, and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favour her, yea, the ſet time is come; for thy ſervants take pleaſure in her ſtones, and favour the duſt thereof.*

God has reſpect to the prayers of his ſaints in all his government of the world, as we may obſerve by the repreſentation made, Revelations viii. at the beginning. There we read of ſeven angels ſtanding before the throne of God, and receiving of him ſeven trumpets, at the ſounding of which great and mighty changes were to be brought to paſs in the world, through many ſucceſſive ages. But when theſe angels had received their trumpets, they muſt ſtand ſtill, and all muſt be in ſilence, not one of them muſt be allowed to ſound, until the prayers of the

ſaints are attended to. The angel of the covenant, as a glorious High Prieſt, comes and ſtands at the altar, with much incenſe, to offer with the prayers of all ſaints upon the golden altar, before the throne; and the ſmoke of the incenſe, with the prayers of the ſaints, aſcends up with acceptance before God, out of the angel's hand; and then the angels prepare themſelves to ſound.—And God, in the events of every trumpet, remembers thoſe prayers, as appears at laſt, by the great and glorious things he accompliſhes for his church, in the iſſue of all, in anſwer to theſe prayers, in the event of the laſt trumpet, which brings the glory of the latter days, when theſe prayers ſhall be turned into joyful praiſes. Rev. xi. 15, 16, 17. *And the ſeventh angel ſounded, and there were great voices in heaven, ſaying—The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Chriſt; and he ſhall reign for ever and ever. And the four-and-twenty elders, which ſat before God on their ſeats, fell upon their faces, and worſhipped God, ſaying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and waſt, and art to come, becauſe thou haſt taken to thee thy great power, and*

haſt reigned. Since it is thus, that it is the pleaſure of God ſo to honor his people, as to carry on all the deſigns of his kingdom in this way, viz. by the prayers of his ſaints; this gives us great reaſon to think, that whenever the time comes that God gives an extraordinary ſpirit of prayer for the promiſed advancement of his kingdom on earth, (which is God's great aim in all preceding providences, and which is the main thing that the ſpirit of prayer in the ſaints aims at) then the fulfilling this event is nigh.

God, in wonderful grace, is pleaſed to repreſent himſelf, as it were, at the command of his people, with regard to mercies of this nature, ſo as to be ready to beſtow them whenever they ſhall earneſtly pray for them. *Thus ſaith the Lord, the holy One of Iſrael, and his maker, Aſk of me of things to come, concerning my ſons, and concerning the work of my hands, command ye me.* What God is ſpeaking of in this context, is the reſtoration of his church; not only a reſtoration from temporal calamity, and an outward captivity by Cyrus; but alſo a ſpiritual reſtoration and advancement, by God's commanding the heavens to *drop down from above, and the ſkies to pour down righteouſneſs, and cau-*

ſing the earth to open and bring forth ſalvation, and righteouſneſs to ſpring up together. God would have his people aſk of him, or enquire of him by earneſt prayer, to do this for them; and manifeſts himſelf as being at the command of earneſt prayers for ſuch a mercy: and a reaſon why God is ſo ready to hear ſuch prayers, is couched in the words, viz. Becauſe it is prayer for his own church, his choſen and beloved people, *his ſons and daughters, and the work of his hands;* and he cannot deny any thing that is aſked for their comfort and proſperity.

God ſpeaks of himſelf as ſtanding ready to be gracious to his church, and to appear for its reſtoration, and only waiting for ſuch an opportunity to beſtow this mercy, when he ſhall hear the cries of his people for it, that he may beſtow it in anſwer to their prayers. *Therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious to thee; and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: For the Lord is a God of judgment; bleſſed are all they that wait for him. For the people ſhall dwell in Zion at Jeruſalem.— Thou ſhalt weep no more; he will be very gracious unto thee, at the voice of thy cry:— when he ſhall hear it, he ſhall anſwer thee.—*

The words imply as much as that when God once ſees his people much engaged in praying for this mercy, it ſhall be no longer delayed. Chriſt deſires to hear the voice of his ſpouſe, *that is in the clefts of the rock, in the ſecret places of the ſtairs*; in a low and obſcure ſtate, driven into ſecret corners: he only waits for this, in order to put an end to her ſtate of affliction, and cauſe *the day to break, and the ſhadows to flee away.* If he once heard her voice in earneſt prayer, he would come ſwiftly over *the mountains of ſeparation* between him and her, *as a roe, or young hart.* When his church is in a low ſtate, and oppreſſed by her enemies, and cries to him, he will ſwiftly fly to her relief, as birds fly at the cry of their young. Yea, when that glorious day comes, that I am ſpeaking of, *before they call, he will anſwer them, and while they are yet ſpeaking, he will hear;* and, in anſwer to their prayers, he will make *the wolf and the lamb feed together*, &c. When the ſpouſe prays for the effuſion of the Holy Spirit, and the coming of Chriſt, by granting the tokens of his ſpiritual preſence in the church, ſaying, *Awake, O north wind, and come, thou ſouth, blow upon my garden, that the ſpices thereof may flow out:*

let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleaſant fruits; there ſeems to be an immediate anſwer to her prayer, in the next words, in abundant communications of the Spirit, and beſtowment of ſpiritual bleſſings; *I am come into my garden, my ſiſter, my ſpouſe; I have gathered my myrrh with my ſpice; I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk. Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.*

Scripture inſtances and examples of ſucceſs in prayer, give great encouragement to pray for this mercy. Moſt of the remarkable deliverances and reſtorations of the church of God, that we have account of in the ſcriptures, were in anſwer to prayer. So was the redemption of the church of God from the Egyptian bondage. The great reſtoration of the church in the latter day, is ſpoken of as reſembled by this; as in Iſai. lxiv. 1—4. xi. 11, 15, 16. xliii. 2, 3, 16—19. li. 10, 11, 15. lxiii. 11, 12, 13. Zech. x. 10, 11. Hoſ. ii. 14, 15. It was in anſwer to prayer, that the ſun ſtood ſtill over Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, and God's people obtained that great victory over their enemies: in which

wonderful miracle, God ſeemed to have ſome reſpect to a future more glorious event to be accompliſhed for the chriſtian church, in the day of her victory over her enemies, in the latter days; even that event foretold, Iſai. xl. 20. *Thy ſun ſhall no more go down, neither ſhall thy moon withdraw itſelf.* It was in anſwer to prayer, that God delivered his church from the mighty hoſt of the Aſſyrians, in Hezekiah's time; which diſpenſation is abundantly made uſe of, as a type of the great things God will do for the chriſtian church in the latter days, in the prophecies of Iſaiah. The reſtoration of the church of God from the Babyloniſh captivity, as abundantly appears both by ſcripture-prophecies and hiſtories, was in anſwer to extraordinary prayer; ſee Jer. xxix. 10—14. and l. 4, 5. Dan. ix. throughout. Ezra viii. 21, &c. Neh. i. 4. to the end.—iv. 4, 5. and chap. ix. throughout. This reſtoration of the Jewiſh church, after the deſtruction of Babylon, is evidently a type of the glorious reſtoration of the chriſtian church, after the deſtruction of the kingdom of Antichriſt; which, as all know, is abundantly ſpoken of in the revelation of St. John, as the anti-type of Babylon. Sampſon, out of

weakneſs, received ſtrength to pull down Dagon's temple, through prayer. So the people of God, in the latter days, will, out of weakneſs, be made ſtrong, and will become the inſtruments of pulling down the kingdom of Satan, by prayer.

The Spirit of God was poured out upon Chriſt himſelf, in anſwer to prayer. *Now when all the people were baptized, it came to paſs, that Jeſus alſo being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghoſt deſcended in a bodily ſhape like a dove, upon him; and a voice came from heaven, which ſaid, Thou art my beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleaſed.* The Spirit deſcends on the church of Chriſt, the ſame way, in this reſpect, that it deſcended on the head of the church. The greateſt effuſion of the Spirit that ever yet has been, even that which was in the primitive times of the chriſtian church, which began in Jeruſalem on the day of Pentecoſt, was in anſwer to extraordinary prayer. When the diſciples were gathered together to their Lord, a little before his aſcenſion, *he commanded them that they ſhould not depart from Jeruſalem, but wait for the promiſe of the Father, which,* ſaith he, *ye have heard of me,* i. e. the pro-

miſe of the Holy Ghoſt; Acts i. 4. What they had their hearts upon was the reſtoration of the kingdom of Iſrael: *Lord*, ſay they, *wilt thou, at this time, reſtore again the kingdom to Iſrael*, ver. 6. And according to Chriſt's direction, after his aſcenſion, they returned to Jeruſalem, and continued in united fervent prayer and ſupplication. It ſeems they ſpent their time in it from day to day, without ceaſing; until the ſpirit came down in a wonderful manner upon them, and that work was begun which never ceaſed, until the world was turned upſide down, and all the chief nations of it were converted to chriſtianity; and that glorious deliverance and advancement of the chriſtian church, that was in the days of Conſtantine the Great, followed the extraordinary cries of the church to God, as the matter is repreſented, Rev. vi. at the opening of the fifth ſeal. The church, in her ſuffering ſtate, is repreſented crying with a loud voice, *How long, Lord, holy and true, doſt thou not judge, and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?* And the opening of the next ſeal brings on that mighty revolution, in the days of Conſtantine, compared to thoſe great changes that ſhall be at the end of the world.

As there is ſo great and manifold reaſon from the word of God, to think that if a ſpirit of earneſt prayer for that great effuſion of the Spirit of God which I am ſpeaking of, prevailed in the chriſtian church, the mercy would be ſoon granted; ſo thoſe that are engaged in ſuch prayer might well expect the firſt benefit. God will come to thoſe that are ſeeking him and waiting for him; Iſai. xxv. 9. and xxxvi. 8. When Chriſt came in the fleſh, he was firſt revealed to them who were *waiting for the conſolation of Iſrael, and looking for redemption in Jeruſalem.* And in that great out-pouring of the Spirit that was in the days of the apoſtles, which was attended with ſuch glorious effects among the Jews and Gentiles, the Spirit came down firſt on thoſe that were engaged in united earneſt prayer for it.—A ſpecial bleſſing is promiſed to them that love and pray for the proſperity of the church of God. *Pray for the peace of Jeruſalem. They ſhall proſper, that love thee.*

7. We are preſented with many motives in the diſpenſations of Divine Providence, at this day, to excite us to be much in prayer for this mercy.

There is much in Providence to ſhew us

our need of it, and put us on desiring it.—The great outward calamities, in which the world is involved, and particularly the bloody war that embroils and wastes the nations of Christendom, and in which our nation has so great a share, may well make all that believe God's word, and love mankind, earnestly long and pray for that day, when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the nations shall beat their swords into plow-shares, &c. But especially do the spiritual calamities, and miseries of the present time, shew our great need of that blessed effusion of God's Spirit; there having been, for so long a time, so great a with-holding of the Spirit, from the greater part of the Christian world, and such dismal consequences of it, in the great decay of vital piety, and the exceeding prevalence of infidelity, heresy, and all manner of vice and wickedness; and especially in our land and nation; of which a most affecting account has lately been published in a pamphlet, printed in London, and re-printed in Scotland, entitled, Britain's Remembrancer; by which it seems that luxury, and wickedness of almost every kind, is well nigh come to the utmost extremity in the nation; and if vice should continue to

prevail and increaſe for one generation more, as it has the generation paſt, it looks as tho' the nation could hardly continue in being, but muſt ſink under the weight of its own corruption and wickedneſs. And the ſtate of things in the other parts of the Britiſh dominions, beſides England, is very deplorable. The church of Scotland has very much loſt her glory, greatly departing from her ancient purity, and excellent order; and has of late been bleeding with great and manifold wounds, occaſioned by their diviſions and hot contentions. And there are frequent complaints from thence, by thoſe that lament the corruptions of that land, of ſin and wickedneſs, of innumerable kinds, abounding and prevailing of late, among all ranks and ſorts of men there. And how lamentable is the moral and religious ſtate of theſe American colonies? Of New-England in particular! How much is that kind of religion, that was profeſſed and much experienced and practiſed, in the firſt, and apparently the beſt times in New-England, grown and growing out of credit? What fierce and violent contentions have been of late among miniſters and people, about things of a religious nature? How much is the goſpel-

miniſtry grown into contempt? and the work of the miniſtry, in many reſpects, laid under uncommon difficulties, and even in danger of ſinking amongſt us? How many of our congregations and churches rending in pieces? Church-diſcipline weakened, and ordinances leſs and leſs regarded. What wild and extravagant notions, groſs deluſions of the devil, and ſtrange practices have prevailed, and do ſtill prevail, in many places, under a pretext of extraordinary purity, ſpirituality, liberty, and zeal againſt formality, uſurpation, and conformity to the world? How ſtrong and deeply rooted and general are the prejudices that prevail againſt vital religion, and the power of godlineſs, and almoſt every thing that appertains to it, or tends to it? How apparently are the hearts of people, every where, uncommonly ſhut up againſt all means and endeavours to awaken ſinners and revive religion? Vice and immorality, of all kinds, withal increaſing and unuſually prevailing?—May not an attentive view and conſideration of ſuch a ſtate of things well influence the people that favour the duſt of Zion, to earneſtneſs in their cries to God for a general out-pouring of his Spirit, which only can be an effectual remedy for theſe evils?

Beſides the things that have been mentioned, the freſh attempts made by the Antichriſtian powers againſt the Proteſtant intereſt, in their late endeavours to reſtore a Popiſh government in Great Britain, the chief bulwark of the Proteſtant cauſe; as alſo the perſecution lately revived againſt the Proteſtants in France, may well give occaſion to the people of God, to renewed and extraordinary earneſtneſs in their prayers to him, for the fulfilment of the promiſed downfall of Antichriſt, and that liberty and glory of his church that ſhall follow.

As there is much in the preſent ſtate of things to ſhew us our great need of this mercy, and to cauſe us to deſire it; ſo there is very much to convince us, that *God alone can beſtow it*, and ſhew us our entire and abſolute dependence on him for it. The inſufficiency of human abilities to bring to paſs any ſuch happy change in the world as is foretold, or to afford any remedy to mankind, from ſuch miſeries as have been mentioned, does now remarkably appear. Thoſe obſervations of the apoſtle, 1 Cor. i. *The world by wiſdom knows not God, and God makes fooliſh the wiſdom of this world*, never were verified to ſuch a degree as they are

now. Great diſcoveries have been made in the arts and ſciences, and never was human learning carried to ſuch a height, as in the preſent age; and yet never did the cauſe of religion and virtue run ſo low, in nations profeſſing the true religion. Never was an age wherein ſo many learned and elaborate treatiſes have been written, in proof of the truth and divinity of the Chriſtian religion; yet never were there ſo many infidels among thoſe that were brought up under the light of the goſpel. It is an age, as is ſuppoſed, of great light, freedom of thought, and diſcovery of truth in matters of religion, and detection of the weakneſs and bigotry of our anceſtors, and of the folly and abſurdity of the notions of thoſe that were accounted eminent divines in former generations; which notions, it is imagined, did deſtroy the very foundations of virtue and religion, and enervate all precepts of morality, and, in effect, annul all difference between virtue and vice; and yet vice and wickedneſs did never ſo prevail, like an overflowing deluge. It is an age wherein thoſe mean and ſtingy principles as they are called, of our forefathers, which, as is ſuppoſed, deformed religion, and led

to unworthy thoughts of God, are very much diſcarded, and grown out of credit, and ſuppoſed more free, noble and generous tho'ts of the nature of religion, and of the Chriſtian ſcheme are entertained; but yet never was an age, wherein religion in general was ſo much deſpiſed and trampled on, and Jeſus Chriſt and God Almighty ſo blaſphemed and treated with open daring contempt.

The exceeding weakneſs of mankind, and their inſufficiency in themſelves for the bringing to paſs any thing great and good in the world, with regard to its moral and ſpiritual ſtate, remarkably appears in many things that have attended and followed the extraordinary religious commotion, that has lately been in many parts of Great Britain and America. The infirmity of the human nature has been manifeſted, in a very affecting manner, in the various paſſions that men have been the ſubjects of, and innumerable ways that they have been moved, as a reed ſhaken with the wind, on occaſion of the changes and incidents, both public and private, of ſuch a ſtate of things. How many errors and extremes are we liable to? How quickly over-topped, blinded, miſled, and confounded? And how eaſily does Satan

make fools of men, if confident in their own wiſdom and ſtrength, and left to themſelves? Many, in the late wonderful ſeaſon, were ready to admire and truſt in men, as if all depended on ſuch and ſuch inſtruments, at leaſt did aſcribe too much to their ſkill and zeal, becauſe God was pleaſed to improve them a little while to do extraordinary things; but what great things does the ſkill and zeal of inſtruments do now, when the Spirit of God is withdrawn?

As the preſent ſtate of things may well excite earneſt deſires, after the promiſed general revival and advancement of true religion, and ſerve to ſhew our dependence on God for it, ſo there are many things in Providence, of late, that tend to encourage us in prayer for ſuch a mercy. That infidelity, hereſy and vice do ſo prevail, and that corruption and wickedneſs are riſen to ſuch an extreme height, is that which is exceeding deplorable; but yet, I think, conſidering God's promiſes to his church, and the ordinary method of his diſpenſations, hope may juſtly be gathered from it, that the preſent ſtate of things will not laſt long, but that a happy change is nigh. We know, that God never will deſert the cauſe of truth and ho-

lineſs, nor ſuffer the gates of hell to prevail againſt the church; and that it has uſually been ſo from the beginning of the world, that the ſtate of the church has appeared moſt dark, juſt before ſome remarkable deliverance and advancement. *Many a time may Iſrael ſay—Had not the Lord been on our ſide, then our enemies would have ſwallowed us up quick—The waters had overwhelmed us.* The church's extremity has often been God's opportunity for the magnifying his power, mercy and faithfulneſs towards her. The intereſt of vital piety has long been in general decaying, and error and wickedneſs prevailing; it looks as though the diſeaſe were now come to a criſis, and that things cannot long remain in ſuch a ſtate, but that a change may be expected in one reſpect or other. And not only God's manner of dealing with his church in former ages, and many things in the promiſes and prophecies of his word, but alſo ſeveral things appertaining to preſent and late aſpects of Divine Providence, ſeem to give reaſon to hope that the change will be ſuch, as to magnify God's free grace and ſovereign mercy, and not his revenging juſtice and wrath. There are certain times, that are days of vengeance, ap-

pointed for the more ſpecial diſplays of God's juſtice and indignation; and God has alſo his days of mercy, accepted times, choſen ſeaſons, wherein it is his pleaſure to ſhew mercy, and nothing ſhall hinder it; they are times appointed for the magnifying of the Redeemer and his merits, and the triumphs of his grace, wherein his grace ſhall triumph over mens' unworthineſs in its greateſt height. And if we conſider God's late dealings with our nation and this land, it appears to me that there is much to make us think that this day is ſuch a day; particularly God's preſerving and delivering the nation, when in ſo great danger of ruin by the late rebellion, and his preſerving New-England, and the other Britiſh colonies in America, in ſo remarkable a manner, from the great armament from France, prepared and ſent againſt us the laſt year; and the almoſt miraculous ſucceſs given to us againſt our enemies at Cape-Breton the year before, diſappointing their renewed preparations and freſh attempt againſt theſe colonies, this preſent year 1747, by delivering up the ſtrength of their fleet into the hands of the Engliſh, as they were in their way hither. And alſo in protecting us, from time to time, from armies by land,

that have come againſt us from Canada ſince the beginning of the preſent war with France. Beſides many ſtrange inſtances of protection of particular forts and ſettlements, ſhewing a manifeſt interpoſition of the hand of heaven, to the obſervation of ſome of our enemies, and even of the ſavages. And added to theſe, the late unexpected reſtoring of the greater part of our many captives in Canada, by thoſe that held them priſoners there. It appears to me, that God has gone much out of his uſual way, in his exerciſes of mercy, patience and long-ſuffering in theſe inſtances. God's patience was very wonderful of old, towards the ten tribes, and the people of Judah and Jeruſalem, and afterwards to the Jews in Chriſt's and the apoſtles times; but it ſeems to me, all things conſidered, not equal to his patience and mercy to us. God does not only forbear to deſtroy us, notwithſtanding all our provocations and their aggravations, which it would be endleſs to recount; but he has, in the fore-mentioned inſtances, wrought great things for us, wherein his hand has been moſt viſible, and his arm made bare; eſpecially thoſe two inſtances in America, God's ſucceeding us againſt Cape-Breton, and confounding the ar-

mada from France the laſt year; diſpenſations of Providence which, if conſidered in all their circumſtances, were ſo wonderful, and apparently manifeſting an extraordinary divine interpoſition, that they come, perhaps, the neareſt to a parallel with God's wonderful works of old, in Moſes's, Joſhua's, and Hezekiah's time, of any that have been in theſe latter ages of the world. And it is to my preſent purpoſe to obſerve, that God was pleaſed to do great things for us in both theſe inſtances, in anſwer to extraordinary prayer. Such remarkable appearances of a ſpirit of prayer, on any particular public occaſion, have not been in the land, at any time within my obſervation and memory, as an occaſion of the affair of Cape-Breton.—And it is worthy to be noted and remembered, that God ſent that great ſtorm on the fleet of our enemies the laſt year, that finally diſperſed, and utterly confounded them, and cauſed them wholly to give over their deſigns againſt us, the very night after our day of public faſting and prayer, for our protection and their confuſion.

Thus, although it be a day of great apoſtacy and provocation, yet it is apparently a day of the wonderful works of God; wonders

of power and mercy, which may well lead us to think on thoſe two places of ſcripture, Pſal. cxix. 126. *It is time for thee, Lord, to work, for they have made void thy law.*— And Pſal. lxxv. 1. *That thy name is near, thy wonderous works declare.*—God appears, as it were, loth to deſtroy us, or deal with us according to our iniquities, as great and aggravated as they are, and ſhews that mercy pleaſes him. As corrupt a time as it is, it is plain, by experience, that it is a time wherein God may be found, and ſtands ready to ſhew mercy in anſwer to prayer. He that has done ſuch great things, and has ſo wonderfully and ſpeedily anſwered prayer for temporal mercies, will much more give the Holy Spirit if we aſk him. He marvelloufly preſerves us, and waits to be gracious to us, as though he choſe to make us monuments of his grace, and not his vengeance, and waits only to have us open our mouths wide, that he may fill them.

The late remarkable religious awakenings, that have been in many parts of the Chriſtian world, are another thing that may juſtly encourage us in prayer for the promiſed glorious and univerſal out-pouring of

the Spirit of God. "In or about the year "1732 or 1733, God was pleaſed to pour "out his Spirit on the people of Saltzburg, "in Germany, who were living under Pop-"iſh darkneſs, in a moſt uncommon man-"ner; ſo that above twenty thouſand of "them, merely by reading the Bible, which "they made a ſhift to get in their own lan-"guage, were determined to throw off Pop-"ery, and embrace the reformed Religion; "yea, and to become ſo very zealous for "the truth and goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, as to "be willing to ſuffer the loſs of all things in "the world, and actually to forſake their "houſes, lands, goods and relations, that "they might enjoy the pure preaching of "the goſpel;—with great earneſtneſs, and "tears in their eyes, beſeeching Proteſtant "miniſters to preach to them, in different "places where they came, when baniſhed "from their own country."—In the year 1734 and 1735, there appeared a very great and general awakening in the county of Hampſhire, in the province of the Maſſachuſetts-Bay, in New-England, and alſo in many parts of Connecticut. Since this, there

has been a far more extenſive awakening of many thouſands in England, Wales, and Scotland, and almoſt all the Britiſh provinces in North America. There has alſo been ſomething remarkable of the ſame kind in ſome places of the United Netherlands; and about two years ago, a very great awakening and reformation of many of the Indians in the Jerſeys and Pennſylvania, even among ſuch as never embraced Chriſtianity before; and within theſe two years, a great awakening in Virginia and Maryland. Notwithſtanding the great diverſity of opinions about the iſſue of ſome of theſe awakenings, yet I know of none that have denied that there have been great awakenings of late, in theſe times and places, and that multitudes have been brought to more than common concern for their ſalvation, and for a time were made more than ordinarily afraid of ſin, and bro't to reform their former vicious courſes, and take much pains for their ſalvation. If I ſhould be of the opinion of thoſe that think theſe awakenings and ſtrivings of God's Spirit have been generally not well improved, and ſo, as to moſt, have not iſſued well, but have ended in enthuſiaſm and deluſion, yet,

that the Spirit of God has been of late ſo wonderfully awakening and ſtriving with ſuch multitudes, in ſo many different parts of the world, and even to this day, in one place or other, continues to awaken men, is what I ſhould take great encouragement from, that God was about to do ſomething more glorious, and would, before he finiſhes, bring things to a greater ripeneſs, and not finally ſuffer this work of his to be fruſtrated and rendered abortive by Satan's crafty management; and that theſe unuſual commotions are the forerunners of ſomething exceeding glorious approaching; as the wind, earthquake and fire, at Mount Sinai, were forerunners of that voice, wherein God was, in a more eminent manner; although they alſo were cauſed by a divine power, as it is repreſented, that theſe things were cauſed by the *Lord paſſing by*. 1 Kings xix. 11, 12.

8. How condecent, how beautiful, and of good tendency would it be, for multitudes of Chriſtians, in various parts of the world, by explicit agreement, to unite in ſuch prayer as is propoſed to us.

Union is one of the moſt amiable things that pertains to human ſociety; yea, it is

one of the moſt beautiful and happy things on earth, which indeed makes earth moſt like heaven. God has made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell on all the face of the earth; hereby teaching us this moral leſſon, that it becomes mankind all to be united as one family. And this is agreeable to the nature that God has given men, diſpoſing them to ſociety; and the circumſtances God has placed them in, ſo many ways obliging and neceſſitating them to it. A civil union, or an harmonious agreement among men, in the management of their ſecular concerns, is amiable; but much more a pious union, and ſweet agreement in the great buſineſs for which man was created, and had powers given him beyond the brutes; even the buſineſs of religion, the life and ſoul of which is love. Union is ſpoken of in ſcripture as the peculiar beauty of the church of Chriſt, Cant. vi. 9. *My dove, my undefiled is but one, ſhe is the only one of her mother, ſhe is the choice one of her that bare her; the daughters ſaw her and bleſſed her, yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praiſed her.* Pſal. cxxii. 5. *Jeruſalem is builded as a city that is compact together.* Eph. iv.

3—6. *Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one ſpirit; even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptiſm, one God, and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* Ver. 16. *The whole body fitly framed together and compacted, by that which every joint ſupplieth, according to the effectual working in the meaſure of every part, maketh increaſe of the body, unto the edifying itſelf in love.*

As it is the glory of the church of Chriſt, that ſhe, in all her members, however diſperſed, is thus one, one holy ſociety, one city, one family, one body; ſo it is very deſirable, that this union ſhould be manifeſted, and become viſible; and ſo, that her diſtant members ſhould act as one, in thoſe things that concern the common intereſt of the whole body, and in thoſe duties and exerciſes wherein they have to do with their common lord and head, as ſeeking of him the common proſperity. It becomes all the members of a particular family, who are ſtrictly united, and have in ſo many reſpects one common intereſt, to unite in prayer to God for the things they need; it becomes a

nation, in days of prayer, appointed by national authority, at certain ſeaſons, viſibly to unite in prayer for thoſe public mercies that concern the intereſt of the whole nation; ſo it becomes the church of Chriſt, which is one holy nation, a peculiar people, one heavenly family, more ſtrictly united, in many reſpects, and having infinitely greater intereſts that are common to the whole, than any other ſociety; I ſay, it eſpecially becomes this ſociety, viſibly to unite, and expreſsly to agree together in prayer to God for the common proſperity; and above all, that common proſperity and advancement that is ſo unſpeakably great and glorious, which God has ſo abundantly promiſed to fulfil in the latter days.

It is becoming of Chriſtians, with whoſe character a narrow ſelfiſh ſpirit, above all others, diſagrees, to be much in prayer for that public mercy, wherein conſiſts the welfare and happineſs of the whole body of Chriſt, of which they are members, and the greateſt good of mankind. And union or agreement in prayer is eſpecially becoming, when Chriſtians pray for that mercy, which above all other things concerns them unit-

edly, and tends to the relief, prosperity and glory of the whole body, as well as of each individual member.

Such an union in prayer for the general out-pouring of the Spirit of God, would not only be beautiful, but profitable too. It would tend very much to promote union and charity between distant members of the church of Christ, to promote public spirit, love to the church of God, and concern for the interest of Zion, as well as be an amiable exercise and manifestation of such a spirit.—Union in religious duties, especially in the duty of prayer, in praying one with and for another, and jointly for their common welfare, above almost all other things, tends to promote mutual affection and endearment. And if ministers and people should, by particular agreement and joint resolution, set themselves, in a solemn and extraordinary manner, from time to time, to pray for the revival of religion in the world, it would naturally tend more to awaken in them a concern about things of this nature, and more of a desire after such a mercy; it would engage them to more attention to such an affair, make them more inquisitive about it, more ready to use endeavours to promote

that which they, with ſo many others, ſpend ſo much time in praying for, and more ready to rejoice and praiſe God when they ſee or hear of any thing of that nature or tendency; and in a particular manner, would it naturally tend to engage miniſters (the buſineſs of whoſe life it is, to ſeek the welfare of the church of Chriſt, and the advancement of his kingdom) to greater diligence and earneſtneſs in their work; and it would have a tendency to the ſpiritual profit and advantage of each particular perſon. For perſons to be thus engaged in extraordinary praying for the revival and flouriſhing of religion in the world, will naturally lead each one to reflect on himſelf, and conſider how religion flouriſhes in his own heart, and how far his example contributes to the thing that he is praying for.

9. There is great and particular encouragement given in the word of God, to expreſs union and agreement in prayer. Daniel, when he had a great thing to requeſt of God, viz. That God, by his Holy Spirit, would miraculouſly reveal to him a great ſecret, which none of the wiſe men, aſtrologers, magicians, or ſooth-ſayers of Babylon could find out, he goes to Hananiah, Mi-

ſhael and Azariah, his companions, and they agree together, that they will unitedly deſire mercies of the God of heaven, concerning this ſecret; and their joint requeſt was ſoon granted; and God put great honor upon them, above all the wiſe men of Babylon, to the filling their mouths with praiſe, and to the admiration and aſtoniſhment of Nebuchadnezzar; inſomuch, that that great and haughty monarch, as we are told, fell upon his face and worſhipped Daniel, and owned that *his God was of a truth a God of gods*, and greatly promoted Daniel and his praying companions in the province of Babylon. Eſther, when ſhe had a yet more important requeſt to make, for the ſaving of the church of God, and whole nation of the Jews, diſperſed through the empire of Perſia, when on the brink of ruin, ſends to all the Jews in the city Shuſhan, to pray and faſt with her and her maidens; and their united prayers prevail, ſo that the event was wonderful; inſtead of the intended deſtruction of the Jews, the Jews enemies are deſtroyed every where, and they are defended, honored and promoted, and their ſorrow and diſtreſs is turned into great gladneſs, feaſting, triumph, and mutual joyful congratulations.

The encouragement to explicit agreement in prayer is great from such instances as these; but it is yet greater from those wonderful words of our blessed Redeemer. Mat. xviii. 19. *I say unto you, that if any two of you shall agree on earth touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.* Christ is pleased to give this great encouragement to the union of his followers in this excellent and holy exercise of seeking and serving God; an holy union and communion of his people being that which he greatly desires and delights in, that which he came into the world to bring to pass, that which he especially prayed for with his dying breath, John xvii. that which he died for, and which was one chief end of the whole affair of our redemption by him. Eph. i. *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, wherein he hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath proposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.*

PART III.

OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

I COME now, as was propoſed, in the *third* place, to anſwer and obviate ſome objections, which ſome may be ready to make againſt the thing that has been propoſed to us.

Object. 1. Some may be ready to ſay, That for Chriſtians, in ſuch a manner to ſet apart certain ſeaſons, every week, and every quarter, to be religiouſly obſerved and kept for the purpoſes propoſed, from year to year, would be, in effect, to eſtabliſh certain periodical times of human invention and appointment, to be kept holy to God, and ſo to do the very thing, that has ever been objected againſt, by a very great part of the moſt eminent Chriſtians and Divines among Proteſtants, as what men have no right to do, it being for them to add to God's inſtitutions, and introduce their own inventions and eſtabliſhments into the ſtated worſhip of God, and lay unwarrantable bonds on mens' conſciences, and do what naturally tends to ſuperſtition.

Anſ. To this I would ſay, There can be no juſtice in ſuch an objection againſt this

propoſal, as made to us in the forementioned memorial. Indeed, that caution and prudence appears in the projection itſelf, and in the manner in which it is propoſed to us, that there is not ſo much as any colour for the objection. The propoſal is ſuch, and ſo well guarded, that there ſeems to be no room for the weakeſt Chriſtian that well obſerves it, ſo to miſtake it, as to underſtand thoſe things to be implied in it, that have, indeed, been objected againſt, by many eminent Chriſtians and Divines among Proteſtants, as entangling mens' conſciences, and adding to divine inſtitutions, &c.—Here is no pretence of eſtabliſhing any thing by authority; no appearance of any claim of power in the propoſers, or right to have any regard paid to their determinations or propoſals, by virtue of any deference due to them, in any reſpect, any more than to every individual perſon of thoſe that they apply themſelves to. So far from that, that they expreſsly mention that which they have thought of, as what they would propoſe to the thoughts of others, for their amendments and improvements, declaring that they chuſe rather to receive and ſpread the directions and propoſals of others, than to be the firſt authors

of any.—No times, not ſanctified by God's own inſtitution, are propoſed to be obſerved more than others, under any notion of ſuch times being, in any reſpect, more holy, or more honorable, or worthy of any preference, or diſtinguiſhing regard; either as being ſanctified, or made honorable, by authority, or by any great events of Divine Providence, or any relation to any holy perſons or things; but only as circumſtantially convenient, helpful to memory, eſpecially free from worldly buſineſs, near to the times of the adminiſtration of public ordinances, &c. None attempts to lay any bonds on others, with reſpect to this matter, or to deſire that they ſhould lay any bonds on themſelves, or look on themſelves as under any obligations, either by power or promiſe; or ſo much as come into any abſolute determination in their own minds, to ſet apart any ſtated days from ſecular affairs, or even to fix on any part of ſuch days, without liberty to alter circumſtances, as ſhall be found expedient, and alſo liberty left to a future alteration of judgment, as to expediency, on further trial and conſideration. All that is propoſed is, that ſuch as fall in with what is propoſed in their judgments and inclinations, while they do

ſo, ſhall ſtrengthen, aſſiſt and encourage their brethren that are of the ſame mind, by viſibly conſenting and joining with them in the affair. Is here any thing like making laws in matters of conſcience and religion, or adding mens' inſtitutions to God's, or any ſhew of impoſition, or ſuperſtitious eſteeming and preferring one day above another, or any poſſible ground of entanglement of any one's conſcience?

For men to go about by law to eſtabliſh and limit circumſtances of worſhip, not eſtabliſhed or limited by any law of God, ſuch as preciſe time, place, and order, may be in many reſpects of dangerous tendency. But ſurely it cannot be unlawful or improper for Chriſtians to come into ſome agreement with regard to theſe circumſtances, for it is impoſſible to carry on any ſocial worſhip without it. There is no inſtitution of ſcripture requiring any people to meet together to worſhip God in ſuch a ſpot of ground, or at ſuch an hour of the day; but yet theſe muſt be determined by agreement, or elſe there will be no ſocial worſhip, in any place, or any hour. So we are not determined by inſtitution, what the preciſe order of the different parts of worſhip ſhall be, what ſhall

precede, and what ſhall follow; whether praying or ſinging ſhall be firſt, and what ſhall be next, and what ſhall conclude; but yet ſome order muſt be agreed on by the congregation that unite in worſhip, otherwiſe they cannot jointly carry on divine worſhip, in any way or method at all. If a congregation of Chriſtians do agree to begin their public worſhip with prayer, and next to ſing, and then to attend on the preaching of the word, and to conclude with prayer; and do by conſent carry on their worſhip in this order from year to year, though this order is not appointed in ſcripture, none will call this ſuperſtition. And if a great number of congregations, through a whole land, or more lands than one do, by common conſent, keep the ſame method of public worſhip, none will pretend to find fault with it. But yet for any to go about to bind all to ſuch a method, would be uſurpation and impoſition. And if ſuch a preciſe order ſhould be regarded as ſacred, as though no other could be acceptable to God, this would be ſuperſtition. —If a particular number of Chriſtians ſhall agree, that beſides the ſtated public worſhip of the ſabbath, they will, when their circumſtances allow, meet together to carry on

ſome religious exerciſes on a ſabbath-day night, for their mutual edification; or if ſeveral ſocieties agree to meet together in different places at that time, this is no ſuperſtition, though there be no inſtitution for it. If people in different congregations voluntarily agree to take turns to meet together in the houſe of God, to worſhip him and hear a public lecture, once a month, or once in ſix weeks; it is not unlawful, though there be no inſtitution for it; but yet to do this as a thing ſacred, indiſpenſible, and binding on mens' conſciences, would be ſuperſtition. If Chriſtians of ſeveral neighbouring congregations, inſtead of a lecture, agree on ſome ſpecial occaſion to keep a circular faſt, each congregation taking its turn in a certain time and order, fixed on by conſent; or inſtead of keeping faſt by turns, on different days, one on one week, and one on another, they ſhould all agree to keep a faſt on the ſame day, and to do this either once or frequently, according as they ſhall judge their own circumſtances, or the diſpenſations of the Divine Providence, or the importance of the mercy they ſeek, do require; neither is there any more ſuperſtition in this than the other.

Object. 2. Some may be ready to say, there seems to be something whimsical in its being insisted on that God's people, in different places, should put up their prayers for this mercy at the same time, as though their prayers would be more forcible on that account, and as if God would not be so likely to hear prayers offered up by many, tho' they happened not to pray at the same time, as he would if he heard them all at the same moment.

Ans. To this I would say, If such an objection be made, it must be through misunderstanding. It is not signified or implied in any thing said in the proposal, or in any arguments made use of to enforce it that I have seen, that the prayers of a great number, in different places, will be more forcible, merely because of that circumstance, of their being put up at the same time. It is, indeed, supposed, that it will be very expedient, that certain times for united prayer should be agreed on; which it may be without implying the thing supposed in the objection, on the following accounts.

1. This seems to be a proper expedient for the promoting and maintaining an uni-

on among Chriſtians of diſtant places, in extraordinary prayer for ſuch a mercy. It appears, from what was before obſerved, that there ought to be extraordinary prayers among Chriſtians for this mercy; and that it is fit, that God's people ſhould agree and unite in it. Though there be no reaſon to ſuppoſe that prayers will be more prevalent, merely from that circumſtance, that different perſons pray exactly at the ſame time; yet there will be more reaſon to hope, that prayers for ſuch mercy will be prevalent, when God's people are very much in prayer for it, and when many of them are united in it. If therefore agreeing on certain times for united and extraordinary prayer, be a likely means to promote an union of many in extraordinary prayer, then there is more reaſon to hope that there will be prevalent prayer for ſuch a mercy, for certain times for extraordinary prayer being agreed on. But, that agreement on certain times for united extraordinary prayer, is a likely and proper means to promote and maintain ſuch prayer, I think will be eaſily evident to any one that conſiders the matter. If there ſhould be only a looſe agreement or conſent to it as a duty, or a thing fit and proper, that Chriſ-

tians ſhould be much in prayer for the revival of religion, and much more in it than they uſed to be, without agreeing on particular times, how liable would ſuch a lax agreement be to be ſoon forgotten, and that extraordinary prayerfulneſs, which is fixed to no certain times, to be totally neglected? To be ſure, diſtant parts of the church of Chriſt could have no confidence in one another, that this would not be the caſe. If theſe miniſters in Scotland, inſtead of the propoſal they have made, or any other miniſters or Chriſtians in any part of the Chriſtian world, had ſent abroad only a general propoſal, that God's people ſhould, for the time to come, be much more in prayer for the advancement of Chriſt's kingdom, than had been common among Chriſtians heretofore; and they ſhould hear their propoſal was generally allowed to be good, and that miniſters and people, in one place and another, that had occaſion to ſpeak their minds upon it, owned that it was a very proper thing, that Chriſtians ſhould pray more for this mercy than they generally uſed to do; could they, from this only, have, in any meaſure, the like grounds of dependence, that God's people, in various parts of the

Chriſtian world, would, indeed, henceforward act unitedly, in maintaining extraordinary prayer for this mercy, as if they ſhould not only hear that the duty in general was approved of, but alſo that particular times were actually fixed on for the purpoſe, and an agreement and joint reſolution was come into, that they would, unleſs extraordinarily hindered, ſet apart ſuch particular ſeaſons to be ſpent in this duty, from time to time, maintaining this practice for a certain number of years?

2. For God's people, in diſtant places, to agree on certain times for extraordinary prayer, wherein they will unitedly put up their requeſts to God, is a means fit and proper to be uſed, in order to the viſibility of their union in ſuch prayer. Union among God's people in prayer is truly beautiful, as has been before obſerved and ſhewn; it is beautiful in the eyes of Chriſt, and it is juſtly beautiful and amiable in the eyes of Chriſtians. And if ſo, then it muſt needs be deſirable to Chriſtians that ſuch union ſhould be viſible. If it would be a lovely ſight in the eyes of the church of Chriſt, and much to their comfort, to behold various and dif-

ferent parts of the church united in extraordinary prayer for the general out-pouring of the Spirit, then it must be desirable to them that such an union should be visible, that they may behold it; for if it be not visible, it cannot be beheld. But agreement and union in a multitude in their worship becomes visible, by an agreement in some external visible circumstances. Worship itself becomes visible worship, by something external and visible belonging to the worship, and no other way; therefore union and agreement of many in worship becomes visible no other way, but by union and agreement in the external and visible acts and circumstances of the worship. Such union and agreement becomes visible, particularly by an agreement in those two visible circumstances, time and place. When a number of Christians live near together, and their number and situation is convenient, and they have a desire visibly to unite in any acts of worship, they are wont to make their union and agreement visible by an union in both these circumstances. But when a much greater number of Christians, dwelling in distant places, so that they cannot unite by worshipping in the same place, yet desire a visible

union in ſome extraordinary worſhip, they are wont to make their union and agreement viſible, by agreeing only in the former of thoſe circumſtances, viz. that of time; as is common in the appointment of public faſts and thankſgivings; the ſame day is appointed, for the performance of that extraordinary worſhip, by all thoſe Chriſtians, in different places, that it is intended ſhould be united therein, as a viſible note of their union. This the common light and ſenſe of God's people leads Chriſtians to in all countries. And the wiſdom of God ſeems to dictate the ſame thing, in appointing that his people, through the world, in all ages, in their ſtated and ordinary public worſhip, every week, ſhould manifeſt this union and communion one with another, in their worſhip, as one holy ſociety, and great congregation of worſhippers, and ſervants of God, by offering up their worſhip on the ſame day, for the greater glory of their common Lord, and the greater edification and comfort of the whole body.

If any yet find fault with the propoſal of certain times to be agreed on by God's people in different places, in the manner ſet forth in the memorial, I would aſk whether

they object againſt any ſuch thing, as a viſible agreement of God's people, in different parts of the world, in extraordinary prayer, for the coming of Chriſt's kingdom? Whether ſuch a thing, being viſible, would not be much for the public honor of God's name? And whether it would not tend to Chriſtians aſſiſtance, quickening and encouragement in the duty united in, by mutual example, and alſo to their mutual comfort, by a manifeſtation of that union which is amiable to Chriſt and Chriſtians, and to promote a Chriſtian union among profeſſing Chriſtians in general? And whether we have not reaſon to think, from the word of God, that before that great revival of religion foretold is accompliſhed, there will be a viſible union of the people of God, in various parts of the world, in extraordinary prayer, for this mercy? If theſe things are allowed, I would then aſk further, whether any method can be thought of or deviſed, whereby an expreſs agreement, and viſible union of God's people, in different parts of the world, can be come into, and maintained, but this, or ſome other equivalent to it? If there be any expreſs agreement about any extraordinary

prayer at all, it muſt firſt be propoſed by ſome, and others muſt fall in, in the manner as is repreſented in my text. And if extraordinary prayer be agreed on and maintained by many in different places, viſibly one to another, then it muſt be agreed in ſome reſpect, and with regard to ſome circumſtances, what extraordinary prayer ſhall be kept up; and it muſt be ſeen and heard of, from one to another, what extraordinary prayer is kept up. But how ſhall this be, when no times are agreed upon, and it is never known nor heard, by thoſe in different parts, nor is in any reſpect viſible to them, when, or how often, thoſe in one town or country, and another do attend this extraordinary prayer? The conſequence muſt neceſſarily be, that it can never be known how far, or in what reſpect others join with them in extraordinary prayer, or whether they do it at all; and not ſo much as one circumſtance of extraordinary prayer will be viſible; and indeed nothing will be viſible about it. So that I think any body that well conſiders the matter, will ſee, that he who determines to oppoſe ſuch a method as is propoſed to us in the memorial, and all others equivalent to

it is, in effect, determined to oppose there ever being any such thing at all, as an agreed and visibly united extraordinary prayer, in the church of God, for a general out-pouring of the Spirit.

3. Though it would not be reasonable to suppose, that merely such a circumstance of prayer, as many people's praying at the same time will directly have any influence or prevalence with God, to cause him to be the more ready to hear prayer; yet such a circumstance may reasonably be supposed to have influence on the minds of men; as the consideration of it may tend to encourage and assist those in praying, that are united in prayer. Will any deny, that it has any reasonable tendency to encourage, animate, or in any respect to help the mind of a Christian in serving God in any duty of religion, to join with a Christian congregation, and to see an assembly of his dear brethren around him, at the same time engaged with him in the same duty? And supposing one in this assembly of saints is blind, and sees no one there, but has by other means ground of satisfaction that there is present at that

time a multitude of God's people, that are united with him in the ſame ſervice, will any deny, that his ſuppoſing this, and being ſatisfied of it, can have any reaſonable influence upon his mind, to excite and encourage him, or in any reſpect to aſſiſt him in his worſhip? The encouragement or help that one that joins with an aſſembly in worſhipping God, has in his worſhip, by others being united with him, is not merely by any thing that he immediately perceives by ſight, or any other of the external ſenſes (for union in worſhip is not a thing objected to the external ſenſes;) but by the notice or knowledge the mind has of that union, or the ſatisfaction the underſtanding has that others, at that time, have their minds engaged with him in the ſame ſervice; which may be when thoſe unitedly engaged are at a diſtance one from another, as well as when they are preſent. If one be preſent in a worſhipping aſſembly, and is not blind, and ſees others preſent, and ſees their external behaviour, their union and engagedneſs with him in worſhip is what he does not ſee, and what he ſees encourages and aſſiſts him in his worſhip, only as he takes it as an evidence of that union and concurrence in his worſhip, that

is out of his ſight. And perſons may have evidence of this concerning perſons that are abſent, that may give him as much ſatisfaction of their union with him, as if they were preſent. And therefore the conſideration of others being at the ſame time engaged with him in worſhip, that are abſent, may as reaſonably animate and encourage him in his worſhip as if they were preſent.

There is no wiſdom in finding fault with human nature, as God has made it. Things that exiſt now, at this preſent time, are, in themſelves, no more weighty or important, than like things, and of equal reality, that exiſted in time paſt, or are to exiſt in time to come; yet it is evident, that the conſideration of things being preſent (at leaſt in moſt caſes) does eſpecially affect human nature. As for inſtance, if a man ſhould be certainly informed, that his dear child, at a diſtance, was now under ſome extreme ſuffering, or that an abſent moſt dear friend was at this time thinking of him, and in the exerciſe of great affection towards him, or in the performance of ſome great deed of friendſhip; or if a pious parent ſhould know that now his child was in the act of ſome enormous wickedneſs; or that, on the contrary, he was

now in some eminent exercise of grace, and in the performance of an extraordinary deed of virtue and piety; would not those things be more affecting to the human nature, for being considered as things that are in existence at the present time, than if considered as at some distance of time, either past or future? Hundreds of other instances might be mentioned wherein it is no less plain, that the consideration of the present existence of things gives them advantage to affect the minds of men. Yea, it is undoubtedly so with things in general, that take any hold at all of our affections, and towards which we are not indifferent. And if the mind of a particular child of God is disposed to be affected by the consideration of the religion of other saints, and with their union and concurrence with him in any particular duty or act of religion, I can see no reason why the human mind should not be more moved by the object of its affection, when considered as present, as well in this case, as in any other case; yea, I think, we may on good grounds determine there is none.

Nor may we look upon it as an instance of the peculiar weakness of the human na-

ture, that men are more affected with things that are considered as present, than those that are distant; but it seems to be a thing common to finite minds, and so to all created intelligent beings. Thus, the angels in heaven have peculiar joy, on occasion of the conversion of a sinner, when recent, beyond what they have in that which has been long past. If any therefore shall call it silly and whimsical in any, to value and regard such a circumstance, in things of religion, as their existing at the present time, so as to be the more affected with them for that, they must call the host of angels in heaven a parcel of silly and whimsical beings.

I remember, the Spectator (whom none will call a whimsical author) somewhere speaking of different ways of dear friends mutually expressing their affection, and maintaining a kind of intercourse, in absence one from another, mentions such an instance as this, with much approbation, viz. That two friends, that were greatly endeared one to another, when about to part, and to be for a considerable time necessarily absent, that they might have the comfort of the enjoyment of daily mutual expressions of friendship, in their absence, agreed that they would, eve-

ry day, precisely at such an hour, retire from all company and business, to pray for one another. Which agreement they so valued, and so strictly observed, that when the hour came, scarce any thing would hinder them. And rather than miss this opportunity, they would suddenly break off conversation, and abruptly leave the company they were engaged with.—If this be a desirable way of intercourse of particular friends, is it not a desirable and amiable way of maintaining intercourse and fellowship between brethren in Christ Jesus, and the various members of the holy family of God, in different parts of the world, to come into an agreement, that they will set apart certain times, which they will spend with one accord, in extraordinary prayer to their heavenly Father, for the advancement of the kingdom, and the glory of their common dear Lord and Saviour, and for each other's prosperity and happiness, and the greatest good of all their fellow-creatures through the world?

Object. 3. Some perhaps may object, That it looks too much like Pharisaism, when persons engage in any such extraordinary religious exercises, beyond what is appointed by express institution, for them thus design-

edly to make it manifeſt abroad in the world, and ſo openly to diſtinguiſh themſelves from others.

Anſ. 1. All openly engaging in extraordinary exerciſes of religion, not expreſsly enjoined by inſtitution, is not Phariſaiſm, nor has ever been ſo reputed in the Chriſtian church. As when a particular church or congregation of Chriſtians agree together to keep a day of faſting and prayer, on ſome ſpecial occaſion; or when public days of faſting and thankſgiving are kept, throughout a Chriſtian province or country; and though it be ordinarily the manner for the civil magiſtrate to lead, in the ſetting apart ſuch days, yet that alters not the caſe; if it be Phariſaiſm in the ſociety openly to agree in ſuch extraordinary exerciſes of religion, it is not leſs Phariſaiſm for the heads of the ſociety leading in the affair. And if that were now the caſe with the Chriſtian church, that once was, for about three hundred years together, that the civil magiſtrate was not of the ſociety of Chriſtians, nor concerned himſelf in their affairs; yet this would not render it the leſs ſuitable for Chriſtians, on proper occaſions, jointly, and viſibly one to another, to engage in ſuch extraordinary ex-

ercises of religion, and to keep days of fasting and thanksgiving by agreement.

Ans. 2. As to the latter part of the objection, there can be no room for it in this case. It cannot be objected against what is proposed in the memorial, that if persons should comply with it, it would look like affecting singularity, and open distinction from others of God's professing people, in extraordinary religion, such as was in the Pharisees of old; because it is evident, the very design of the memorial, is not to promote singularity and distinction, but as much as possible to avoid and prevent it. The end of the memorial is not to confine and limit the thing proposed, that it may be practised only by a few, in distinction from the generality; but on the contrary to extend it, and make it as general among professing Christians as possible. Some had complied with the extraordinary duty proposed, and therein had been distinguished from others, for two years, before the memorial was published; and they were more distinguished than they desired, and therefore send abroad this memorial, that the practice might be more spread, and become more general, that they might be less distinguished. What they evidently seek, is

to bring to pafs as general a compliance as poffible of Chriftians of all denominations, "intreating, that the defire of concurrence "and affiftance, contained in the memorial, "may by no means be underftood, as reftric-"ting to any particular denomination or "party, or thofe who are of fuch or fuch "opinions about any former inftances of re-"markable religious concern; but to be ex-"tended to all, who fhall vouchfafe any at-"tention to the propofal, and have at heart "the intereft of vital Chriftianity, and the "power of godlinefs; and who, however dif-"fering about other things, are convinced "of the importance of fervent prayer, to "promote that common intereft, and of "fcripture perfuafives, to promote fuch "prayer.

Object. 4. Another objection, that is very likely to arife in the minds of many againft fuch extraordinary prayer as is propofed for the fpeedy coming of Chrift's kingdom, is that we have no reafon to expect it, until there firft come a time of moft extreme calamity to the church of God, and prevalence of her anti-chriftian enemies againft her; even that which is repreſented, Rev. xi. by the ſlaying

of the witneſſes; but have reaſon to determine the contrary.

Anſ. It is an opinion that ſeems pretty much to have obtained, that before the fulfilment of the promiſes relating to the church's latter-day glory, there muſt come a moſt terrible time, a time of extreme ſuffering, and dreadful perſecution of the church of Chriſt, wherein Satan and Antichriſt are to obtain their greateſt victory over her, and ſhe is to be bro't lower than ever by her enemies. Which opinion has chiefly riſen from the manner of interpreting and applying the fore-mentioned prophecy of the ſlaying of the witneſſes. This opinion, with ſuch perſons as retain it, muſt needs be a great reſtraint and hindrance, with regard to ſuch an affair as is propoſed to us in the memorial. If perſons expect no other, than that the more the glorious times of Chriſt's kingdom are haſtened, the ſooner will come this dreadful time, wherein the generality of God's people muſt ſuffer ſo extremely, and the church of Chriſt be almoſt extinguiſhed, and blotted out from under heaven; how can it be otherwiſe, than a great damp to their hope, courage and activity, in praying for and reaching after the ſpeedy introduction of

thoſe glorious promiſed times? As long as this opinion is retained, it will undoubtedly ever have this unhappy influence on the minds of thoſe that wiſh well to Zion, and favor her ſtones and duſt. It will tend to damp, deaden, and keep down life, hope, and joyful expectation in prayer; and even in great meaſure, to prevent all earneſt, animated and encouraged prayer, in God's people, for this mercy, at any time before it is actually fulfilled. For they that proceed on this hypotheſis in their prayers, muſt, at the ſame time that they pray for this glorious day, naturally conclude within themſelves, that they ſhall never live to ſee on the earth any dawning of it, but only to ſee the diſmal time that ſhall precede it, in which the far greater part of God's people, that ſhall live until then, ſhall die under the extreme cruelties of their perſecutors. And the more they expect that God will anſwer their prayers, by ſpeedy bringing on the promiſed glorious day, the more muſt they withal expect themſelves to have a ſhare in thoſe dreadful things, that nature ſhrinks at the thoughts of, and alſo expect to ſee things that a renewed nature ſhrinks at and dreads; even the prevailing of God's enemies, and

the almoſt total extinguiſhing the true religion in the world. And on this hypotheſis, theſe diſcouragements are like to attend the prayers of God's people, until that diſmal time be actually come; and when that is come, thoſe that had been propheſying and praying in ſackcloth, ſhall generally be ſlain; and after that time is over, then the glorious day ſhall immediately commence. So that this notion tends to diſcourage and hinder all earneſt prayer in the church of God for that glorious coming of Chriſt's kingdom, until it be actually come; and that is to hinder its ever being at all.

It being ſo, this opinion being of ſuch hurtful tendency, certainly it is a thouſand pities it ſhould prevail and be retained, if truly there be no good ground for it.

Therefore in anſwer to this objection, I would, with all humility and modeſty, examine the foundation of that opinion, of ſuch a dreadful time of victory of Antichriſt over the church, yet to be expected: and particularly ſhall endeavour to ſhew that the *ſlaying of the witneſſes*, foretold, Rev. xi. 7—10. is not an event that remains yet to be fulfilled.—To this end, I would propoſe the following things to conſideration.

1. The time wherein the *witneſſes lie dead in the ſtreets of the great city*, doubtleſs, ſignifies the time wherein the true church of Chriſt is loweſt of all, moſt of all prevailed againſt by Antichriſt, and neareſt to an utter extinction; the time wherein there is left the leaſt viſibility of the church of Chriſt yet ſubſiſting in the world, leaſt remains of any thing appertaining to true religion, whence a revival of it can be expected, and wherein all means of it are moſt aboliſhed, and the ſtate of the church is, in all reſpects, furtheſt from any thing whence any hopes of its ever flouriſhing again might ariſe. For before this the witneſſes *propheſy in ſackcloth*, but now they are *dead;* before this they were kept low indeed, yet there was life, and power to bring plagues on their enemies, and ſo much of true religion left, as to be a continual eye-ſore and torment to them; but now their enemies rejoice and feaſt, and have a general public triumph, as having obtained a full victory over them, and having entirely extirpated them, and being completely delivered from them, and all that might give them any fear of being troubled with them any more. This time, wherever it be fixed, doubtleſs, is the time, not only wherein feweſt

profeſſors of the true religion are left in the world, but a time wherein the truth ſhall be fartheſt out of ſight, and out of reach, and moſt forgotten; wherein there are left feweſt beams of light, or traces of truth, feweſt means of information, and opportunities of coming to the knowledge of the truth; and ſo a time of the moſt barbarous ignorance, moſt deſtitute of all hiſtory, reliques, monuments and memory of things appertaining to true religion, or things, the knowledge of which hath any tendency to bring truth again to light, and moſt deſtitute of learning, ſtudy and enquiry.

Now, if we conſider the preſent ſtate of mankind, it is credible that a time will yet come in the world, that in theſe reſpects exceeds all times that were before the Reformation? And that ſuch a time will come before the fall of Antichriſt, unleſs we ſet that at a much greater diſtance, than the farthеſt that any yet have ſuppoſed? It is next to impoſſible, that ſuch a change ſhould be brought about in ſo ſhort a time—it cannot be without a miracle. In order to it, not only muſt the Popiſh nations ſo prevail, as utterly to extirpate the Proteſtant religion through the earth, but muſt do many other

things, far more impoſſible for them to effect, in order to cover the world with ſo groſs and confirmed a darkneſs, and to bury all light and truth in ſo deep an oblivion, and ſo far out of all means and hopes of a revival. And not only muſt a vaſt change be made in the Proteſtant world, but the Popiſh nations muſt be ſtrangely metamorphoſed, and they themſelves muſt be terribly perſecuted by ſome other power, in order to bring them to ſuch a change; nor would perſecution without extirpation be ſufficient for it. If there ſhould be another univerſal deluge, it might be ſufficient to bring things in the world to ſuch a paſs, provided a few ignorant barbarous perſons only were preſerved in an ark; and it would require ſome cataſtrophe, not much ſhort of this, to effect it.

2. In the Reformation, that was in the days of Luther, Calvin, and others their contemporaries, the threatened deſtruction of Antichriſt, that dreadful enemy that had long oppreſſed and worn out the ſaints, was begun; nor was it a ſmall beginning, but Antichriſt hath fallen, at leaſt, halfway to the ground, from that height of power and

grandeur, that he was in before. Then began the vials of God's wrath to be *poured out on the throne of the beaſt*, to the great ſhaking of its foundations, and diminution of its extent; ſo that the Pope loſt near half of his former dominions, and as to degree of authority and influence over what is left, he is not poſſeſſed of what he had before. God now at length, in anſwer to the long continued cries of his people, awaked as one out of ſleep, and began to deliver his church from her exceeding low ſtate, that ſhe had continued in for many ages, under the great oppreſſion of this grand enemy, and to reſtore her from her exile and bondage in the ſpiritual Babylon and Egypt. And it is not agreeable to the analogy of God's diſpenſations, that after this, God ſhould deſert his people, and hide himſelf from them, even more than before, and leave them more than ever in the hands of their enemy, and all this advantage of the church againſt Antichriſt ſhould be entirely given up and loſt, and the power and tyranny of Antichriſt be more confirmed, and the church brought more under, and more entirely ſubdued than ever before, and further from all help and means to recover. This is not God's way

of dealing with his people, or with their enemies; his work of ſalvation is perfect—when he has begun ſuch a work he will carry it on—when he once cauſes the day of deliverance to dawn to his people, after ſuch a long night of diſmal darkneſs, he will not extinguiſh the light, and cauſe them to return again to midnight darkneſs—when he has begun to enkindle the bleſſed fire, he will not quench the ſmoaking flax, until he hath brought forth judgment unto victory. When once the church, after her long labour and ſore travail, has brought forth her man-child, and wrought ſome deliverance, her enemies ſhall never be able to deſtroy this child, though an infant, but it ſhall aſcend up to heaven, and be ſet on high out of their reach.

The deſtruction that God often foretold and threatened to ancient Babylon (which is often referred to in the Revelation, as a great type of the anti-chriſtian church) was gradually accompliſhed, and fulfilled by various ſteps, at a great diſtance of time one from another; it was begun in the conqueſt of Cyrus, and was further accompliſhed by Darius, about eighteen years after, by a yet

greater deſtruction, wherein it was brought much nearer to utter deſolation; but it was about two hundred and twenty-three years after this, before the ruin of it was perfected, and the prophecies againſt it fully accompliſhed, in its being made an utter and perpetual deſolation, without any human inhabitant, becoming the dwelling-place for owls, dragons, and other doleful creatures. But yet when God had once begun to deſtroy her, he went on until he finiſhed, and never ſuffered her any more to recover and eſtabliſh her former empire. So the reſtitution of the Jewiſh church, after the Babyloniſh captivity, was gradual, by various ſteps; there were ſeveral times of return of the Jews from captivity, and ſeveral diſtinct decrees of the Perſian emperors, for the reſtoring and rebuilding Jeruſalem, and reeſtabliſhing the Jewiſh church and ſtate; and it was done in turbulent times, there were great interruptions and checks, and violent oppoſitions, and times wherein the enemy did much prevail: But yet, when God had once begun the work he alſo made an end; he never ſuffered the enemies of the Jews to bring Jeruſalem to ſuch a ſtate of deſolation as it had been in before, until

the promiſed reſtoration was complete. Again, the deliverance of God's church from the oppreſſion of Antiochus Epiphanes, (another known type of Antichriſt) was gradual; they were firſt aſſiſted in a ſmall degree, by the Maccabees, and afterwards the promiſed deliverance was completed, in the recovery of Jeruſalem, the reſtoration of the temple, the miſerable end of Antiochus, and the conſequent more full deliverance of the whole land. But after God once began to appear for the help of his church in that inſtance, after it ſeemed dead and paſt all hope, he never ſuffered Antiochus to prevail againſt his people, to that degree, again; though the utmoſt ſtrength of this great monarch was uſed, from time to time, in order to it, and his vaſt empire was engaged againſt an handful that oppoſed them: God never forſook the work of his own hands; when he had begun to deliver his people, he alſo made an end. And ſo Haman, that proud and inveterate enemy of the Jews, that tho't to extirpate the whole nation, who alſo was probably another type of Antichriſt, when he began to fall before Eſther and Mordecai, never ſtayed, until his ruin, and the church's deliverance was complete. Haman's wife

ſpeaks of it, as an argument of his approaching inevitable full deſtruction, that he *had begun to fall*, Eſth. vi. 15.

3. If it ſhould be ſo, that anti-chriſtian tyranny and darkneſs ſhould hereafter ſo prevail againſt the Proteſtant church, and the true religion, and every thing appertaining to it, as to bring things to the paſs forementioned, this would hardly ſo properly anſwer the prophecy of ſlaying the two witneſſes; for, doubtleſs, one reaſon why they are called two witneſſes is, that the number of the remaining witneſſes for the truth was, though ſufficient, yet very ſmall. Which was remarkably the caſe, in the dark times of Popery; but ſince the Reformation the number of thoſe appearing on the ſide of true religion, has been far from being ſo ſmall. —The viſible church of Chriſt has been vaſtly large, in compariſon of what it was before; the number of Proteſtants has ſometimes been thought nearly equal to that of the Papiſts; and, doubtleſs, the number of true ſaints has been far greater than before.

4. It ſeems to be ſignified in prophecy, that after the Reformation, Antichriſt ſhould never prevail againſt the church of Chriſt any more, as he had done before. I cannot

but think, that whoever reads and well conſiders what the learned Mr. Lowman has written on the five firſt vials, Rev. xvi. in his late Expoſition on the Revelation, muſt think it to be very manifeſt, that what is ſaid, verſe 10, of the pouring out of the fifth vial *on the throne of the beaſt*, (for ſo it is in the original) is a prophecy of the Reformation. Then the vial of God's wrath was poured out on the throne of the beaſt, *i. e.* according to the language of ſcripture, on his authority and dominion, greatly to weaken and diminiſh it, both in extent and degree. But when this is repreſented in the prophecy, then it is added, *and his kingdom was full of darkneſs, and they gnawed their tongues for pain.* If we conſider what is commonly intended by ſuch like phraſes in the ſcripture, I think we ſhall be naturally, and, as it were, neceſſarily led to underſtand thoſe words thus: Their policy, by which heretofore they have prevailed, ſhall now fail them; their authority ſhall be weakened, and their dominion greatly diminiſhed, and all their craft and ſubtilty ſhall not avail them to maintain and ſupport the throne of the beaſt, or even again to extend his authority ſo far as it had been before extended,

and to recover what it loſt; but all their crafty devices to this end ſhall be attended with vexatious tormenting diſappointment; they that have the management of the affairs of the beaſt's kingdom, ſhall henceforward grope as in the dark, and ſtumble, and be confounded in their purpoſes, plots and enterprizes; formerly their policy was greatly ſucceſsful, was as a light to guide them to their ends, but now their kingdom ſhall be full of darkneſs, and their wiſdom ſhall fail them in all their devices to ſubdue, and again to bring under the church of God.—The ſcripture takes notice of the great policy and ſubtilty of the powers that ſupport this kingdom, Dan. vii. 8. *And, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man.* So it is ſaid of Antiochus Epiphanes, that great type of Antichriſt, Dan. viii. 23. *A king of fierce countenance, and underſtanding dark ſentences, ſhall ſtand up.* Ver. 25. *And thro' his policy alſo, ſhall he cauſe craft to proſper in his hand.* This underſtanding and policy is the light of this kingdom, as true wiſdom is the light of the ſpiritual Jeruſalem. And, therefore, when the light fails, then may the kingdom of this ſpiritual Egypt be ſaid to be full of darkneſs. God hencefor-

ward will defend his people from theſe myſtical Egyptians, as he defended Iſrael of old from Pharaoh and his hoſt, when purſuing after them, by placing a cloud and darkneſs in their way, and ſo not ſuffering them to come nigh. So he will protect his church from the men of that city that is ſpiritually called Sodom, as Lot's houſe, wherein were the angels, was defended from the men of Sodom, by their being ſmitten with darkneſs or blindneſs, ſo that they wearied themſelves to find the door; and as God defended the city in which was Eliſha the prophet, and witneſs of the Lord, from the Syrians, when they compaſſed it about with horſes and chariots, and a great hoſt to apprehend him, by ſmiting them with blindneſs. The ſcripture teaches us, that God is wont in this way to defend his church and people from their crafty and powerful enemies, Job v. 11, &c. *To ſet up on high thoſe that be low, that thoſe which mourn may be exalted to ſafety: He diſappointeth the devices of the crafty, ſo that their hands cannot perform their enterprize: He taketh the wiſe in their own craftineſs, and the counſel of the forward is carried headlong: They meet with darkneſs in the day-time, and grope in the*

noon-day as in the night; but he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty. Psal. xxxv. 4. 6. *Let them be confounded and put to shame, that seek after my soul; let them be turned back, and brought to confusion. that devise my hurt —Let their way be dark and slippery.*

Upon the account of such defence of God's Protestant church, and disappointment and confusion of all the subtle devices, deep-laid schemes, and furious attempts of their anti-christian enemies, to bring them under, and root them out, and their seeing them still maintaining their ground, and subsisting in an independency on them, in spite of all that they do, it makes them as it were gnash their teeth, and bite their tongues for mere rage and vexation; agreeable to Psal. cxii. 9, 10. *His righteousness endureth for ever, his horn shall be exalted with honour: The wicked shall see it and be grieved, and gnash with his teeth and melt away: The desire of the wicked shall perish.*

Hitherto this prophecy has been very signally fulfilled; since the Reformation, the kingdom of Antichrist has been remarkably filled with darkness in this respect. Innu-

merable have been the crafty devices, and great attempts of the church of Rome, wherein they have exerted their utmoſt policy and power, to recover their loſt dominions, and again to ſubjugate the Proteſtant nations, and ſubdue the northern hereſy, as they call it. They have wearied themſelves in theſe endeavours for more than two hundred years paſt; but have hitherto been diſappointed, and have often been ſtrangely confounded. When their matters ſeemed to be brought to a ripeneſs, and they triumphed as though their point was gained, their joy and triumph has ſuddenly turned into vexation and torment. How many have been their politic and powerful attempts againſt the Proteſtant intereſt in our nation in particular? And how wonderfully has God diſappointed them from time to time! And as God has hitherto ſo remarkably fulfilled his word in defending his Proteſtant church from Antichriſt, ſo I think we have ground to truſt in him, that he will defend it to the end.

5, The hypotheſis of thoſe who ſuppoſe the ſlaying of the witneſſes is a thing that yet remains to be fulfilled, makes the prophecies of the Revelation to be inconſiſtent

one with another. According to their hypotheſis, that battle, Rev. xi. 7. wherein the beaſt makes war with the witneſſes, and overcomes them, and kills them, is the laſt and greateſt conflict between Antichriſt and the church of Chriſt, which is to precede the utter overthrow of the anti-chriſtian kingdom. And they muſt ſuppoſe ſo, for they ſuppoſe, that immediately after the ſufferings the church ſhall endure in that war, ſhe ſhall ariſe, and, as it were, aſcend into heaven; *i. e.* as they interpret it, the church ſhall be directly advanced to her latter-day reſt, proſperity and glory. And conſequently, this conflict muſt be the ſame with that great battle between Antichriſt and the Church, that is deſcribed, chap. xvi. 13. to the end, and more largely, chap. xix. 11. to the end. For that which is deſcribed in theſe places, is moſt evidently and indiſputably the greateſt and laſt battle or conflict that ſhall be between the church and her anti-chriſtian enemies, on which the utter downfall of Antichriſt, and the church's advancement to her latter-day glory, ſhall be immediately conſequent. And ſo the earthquake that attends the reſurrection of the witneſſes, chap. xi. 13. muſt be the ſame with that

great earthquake that is described, chap. xvi. 18. And the falling of the tenth part of the city must be the same with that terrible and utter destruction of Antichrist's kingdom, chap. xvi. 17. to the end.

But these things cannot be. The battle. chap. xi. 7. cannot be the same with that last and great battle between the Church and Antichrist, described, chap xvi. and xix.—For the things that are said of one and the other, and their issue, are in no wise consistent. In that battle, chap. xi. the church of God conflicts with her enemies in sorrow, sackcloth, and blood; but in the other the matter is represented exceedingly otherwise —the church goes forth to fight with Antichrist, not in sackcloth and blood, but cloathed in white raiment, Christ himself before them, as their captain, going forth in great pomp and magnificence, upon a *white horse*, and *on his head many crowns*, and *on his vesture, and on his thigh, a name written*, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS; and the saints who follow so glorious a leader to this great battle, follow him on *white horses, cloathed in fine linen, white and clean*, in garments of strength, joy, glory and triumph; in the same kind of raiment, that the

ſaints appear in, when they are repreſented as triumphing with Chriſt, with palms in their hands, chap. vii. 9. And the iſſue of the latter of theſe conflicts, is quite the reverſe of the former. In the battle, chap. xi. 7. *The beaſt makes war with the witneſſes, and* OVERCOMES THEM, AND KILLS THEM; the ſame is foretold, Dan. vii. 21. *I beheld, and the ſame horn made war with the ſaints, and prevailed againſt them.*—And Rev. xii. 7. *And it was given unto him to make war with the ſaints, and to overcome them.* But in the iſſue of that laſt and great battle, which the church ſhall have with her anti-chriſtian enemies, the church ſhall OVERCOME THEM, AND KILL THEM, Rev. xvii. 14. *Theſe ſhall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb ſhall overcome them; for he is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings; and they that are with him, are called, and choſen, and faithful,* compared with chapter xix. 16, and following verſes, and chapter xvi. 16, 17. In the conflict that the beaſt ſhall have with the witneſſes, the *beaſt kills them, and their dead bodies lie unburied;* as though they were to be meat for the beaſts of the earth, and fowls of heaven; but in that laſt battle, it is repreſented that Chriſt and his church *ſhall ſlay their e-*

nemies, and give their dead bodies to be meat for the fowls of heaven, chap. xix. 17. to the end. There is no manner of appearance, in the deſcriptions which are given of that laſt great battle, of any advantages gained in it, by the enemies of the church, before they themſelves are overcome, but all appearance of the contrary. Be ſure the deſcriptions in the xvi. and xix. chapters of the Revelation will, by no means, allow of ſuch an advantage, as the overcoming God's people, and ſlaying them, and their lying dead for ſome time, and unburied, that their dead bodies may be for their enemies to abuſe, and trample on, and make ſport with. In chap. xvi. we read of their being gathered together againſt the church, a mighty hoſt, into the place called Armageddon, and then the firſt thing we hear of, is the pouring out the ſeventh vial of God's wrath, and a voice ſaying—*It is done.* And ſo in the xix. chap. we have an account of the *beaſt, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, being gathered together to make war againſt him that ſat on the horſe, and againſt his army.* And then the next thing we hear of is, that *the beaſt is taken, and with him the falſe prophet;* and that *theſe are both caſt alive into the lake of fire;* and

that *the remnant of their vaſt army are ſlain, and all the fowls filled with their fleſh.* The iſſue of the conflict of the beaſt with the witneſſes, is the triumph of the church's enemies over God's people, looking on them as entirely vanquiſhed, and their intereſt utterly ruined, paſt all poſſibility of recovery: *They that dwell on the earth ſhall ſee the dead bodies of the ſaints lying in the ſtreets of the great city, and ſhall rejoice over them, and make merry, and ſend gifts one to another.*— But the iſſue of that great and laſt battle is quite the reverſe; it is the church's triumph over her enemies, as being utterly and for ever deſtroyed.

Here, if any one ſhall ſay, that the aſcenſion of the witneſſes into heaven in the ſight of their enemies, may, as has more generally been ſuppoſed, ſignify the church's laſt victory and triumph over her anti-chriſtian enemies, and final deliverance from them, and yet the battle between Antichriſt and the witneſſes, ſpoken of, Rev. xi. 7. wherein the witneſſes are ſlain, may not be the ſame with that laſt and greateſt battle between Antichriſt and the church, chap. xvi. and xix. which immediately precedes and iſſues in the church's final victory and deli-

verance; there may be two great battles, ſoon following one another, though both are not mentioned in the ſame place; one a conflict, wherein Antichriſt prevails againſt the witneſſes, and overcomes them, and kills them, and another that great battle deſcribed, chap. xvi. and xix. after the witneſſes reſurrection, before their aſcenſion into heaven, wherein they ſhall prevail and overcome their enemies, and kill them: I ſay, if any one ſhall ſay thus, they will ſay that which the prophecies give no reaſon, nor allow any room to ſuppoſe. That laſt battle between the Church and Antichriſt, wherein Chriſt and his people obtain a complete victory, is evidently one of the greateſt and remarkable events foretold in all the Apocalypſe; and there is no one thing, unleſs it be the conſummation of all things, in the two laſt chapters, that is deſcribed in ſo ſolemn and auguſt a manner. And the deſcription ſhews that it is an event which, with its circumſtances, muſt take up much time. There is vaſt preparation made for it by the church's enemies; the devils, in order to ſtir men up, and gather them together, to this *battle of that great day of God Almighty, go forth unto the kings of the earth,*

and of the whole world, to propagate various kinds of deluſions, far and wide, all over the world; which, undoubtedly, muſt take up many years time, chap xvi. 13, 14. And then great preparation is made in the church of God, to make oppoſition, chap. xix. 11—17. Now can any reaſonably ſuppoſe, that in what is repreſented, chap. xi. of a great conflict between Antichriſt and God's people, wherein the latter are overcome and ſlain, and lie dead three days (or three years) and a half, and their enemies triumphing over them, but God's people riſing again from the dead in the midſt of this triumph of their enemies, and aſcending into heaven, while the enemies ſtand aſtoniſhed and amazed ſpectators—that the manner of the deſcription leaves fair room for us to ſuppoſe, that after this reſurrection of God's people, they continue long before they aſcend, to encounter with Antichriſt in a new conflict, wherein their enemies, after long time to prepare, ſhould engage with them with vaſtly greater preparations, ſtrength and violence than before, and ſhould wage war with the mighticſt army that ever was gathered againſt the church, and in the greateſt battle that ever was fought!

And beſides, the witneſſes aſcending into heaven in the ſight of their enemies, ſpoken of chap. xi. cannot be the ſame with the church's gaining a glorious aſcendant over her enemies, in her final victory over Antichriſt, ſpoken of chap. xvi. and xix. becauſe the deſcriptions of the events that attend the one and the other do by no means anſwer each other. For, obſerve, it is ſaid, that when the witneſſes *aroſe, and ſtood on their feet, and aſcended into heaven, the ſame hour there was a great earthquake;* but this does not ſeem to anſwer to what is deſcribed, chap. xvi. 18. *And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and there was a great earthquake, ſuch as was not ſince men were upon the earth, ſo mighty an earthquake, and ſo great.* —It is ſaid, that at the ſame time of the firſt earthquake, chap. xi. 13. *The tenth part of the city fell;* but how far does this fall ſhort of what is deſcribed, as attending the great earthquake? chap. xv. 19, 20. *And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell; and great Babylon came into remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceneſs of his wrath; and every iſland fled away, and the*

mountains were not found. It is said of the earthquake, chap. xi. *And in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand;* but how far is this from answering the slaughter described, chap. xix. 17, &c. Which is represented as a general slaughter of the kings, captains, mighty men, horses, and armies of the earth, and of the whole world; so that all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, as far as the sun shines, are filled with the flesh of the dead carcases, it being the *flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great;* (compare chap. xvi. 14.) who can think, that this great slaughter, that is thus represented, should, in chap. xi. be only called a *slaying of seven thousand men?*

If we read this very eleventh chapter thro', we shall see that the falling of the tenth part of the city, and the witnesses rising and ascending into heaven, are entirely distinct from the final destruction of Antichrist, and that advancement of the church to her latter-day glory, that is consequent upon it.—The judgments here spoken of, as executed on God's enemies, are under another woe; and the benefits bestowed on the church, are under another trumpet. For immediately after the account of the rising and ascend-

ing of the witneſſes, and the tenth part of the city's falling, and the ſlaying of the ſeven thouſand men, and the affrighting of the reſt, and their giving glory to the God of heaven, follow theſe words in the 14th and 15th verſes, *The ſecond woe is paſt, and behold the third woe cometh quickly. And the ſeventh angel ſounded, and there were great voices in heaven, ſaying—The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Chriſt, and he ſhall reign for ever and ever.* And in the following verſes, we have an account of the praiſes ſung to God on this occaſion. And then in that laſt verſe, we have a brief hint of that ſame earthquake, and the great hail, and thoſe thunders, and lightnings, and voices, that we have an account of in the latter part of chap. xvi. So that the earthquake mentioned in the laſt verſe of chap. xi. is that great earthquake that attends the laſt great conflict of the church and her enemies, and not that mentioned ver. 13.

The three woes are the woes of God on Antichriſt and his ſubjects; and the third and laſt of them evidently ſignifies the terrible judgments of God on Antichriſt, by which God's wrath upon him ſhall be ful-

filled in his utter deſtruction; but the calamities on Antichriſt, ſpoken of as attending the riſing and aſcending of the witneſſes, ſuch as the falling of the tenth part of the city, and ſlaying ſeven thouſand men, do not belong to this laſt woe, and therefore do not ſignify the final deſtruction of Antichriſt; for the words of verſe 14. will by no means allow of ſuch a ſuppoſition; for there, immediately after giving an account of theſe calamities, it is added—*The ſecond woe is paſt; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly;* making a moſt plain and expreſs diſtinction between theſe calamities that had already been mentioned, and eſpecially theſe that were juſt then mentioned in the very laſt words, and the calamities that belong to the third woe, that yet remain to be mentioned; for by being paſſed, the prophet is to be underſtood no otherwiſe than paſſed in the declaration and repreſentation—it was not paſt in any other reſpect; it is as much as to ſay, Thus an account has been given of the calamities upon Antichriſt that belong to the ſecond woe; now I proceed to give an account of thoſe diſpenſations of Providence that belong to the third and laſt woe, which ſhall prove Antichriſt's final deſtruction, and

in the kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Chriſt.

What was fulfilled in the Reformation, well anſwers the repreſentation made concerning the witneſſes, Rev. xi. 11. 12. *Of the ſpirit of life from God entering into them, and their ſtanding on their feet, and aſcending up to heaven, in the ſight of their enemies.* A little before the Reformation, the ſtate of the church of God, and of true religion was loweſt of all, and neareſt to utter extinction.—Antichriſt had, after great and long ſtruggles, prevailed againſt the Waldenſes, Albigenſes, and Bohemians. The war with the Albigenſes ſeems eſpecially to be intended by the war of the beaſt with the witneſſes, ſpoken of verſe 7. Theſe were witneſſes to the truth that were the moſt numerous and conſiderable, and thoſe that moſt tormented the church of Rome. And the war that was maintained againſt them, was, by far, the greateſt that ever Antichriſt had againſt any of the profeſſors of the truth, before the Reformation, and was properly the war of the beaſt; it was the Pope that proclaimed the war, and that raiſed the ſoldiers by his emiſſaries and prieſts, preaching the croſs, gathering innumerable multitudes of pilgrims

from all parts of Chriſtendom, and raiſing one croiſade after another, which were conducted and managed by the Pope's legates; and it was the Pope that paid the ſoldiers with pardons, indulgences, promiſes of Paradiſe, and ſuch like trumpery. When Antichriſt had gradually prevailed againſt theſe witneſſes, with much difficulty, and long continued violent ſtruggling, and after innumerable vexatious diſaſters and diſappointments, the church of God, in the time of Luther, and other reformers, on a ſudden, in a wonderful manner, revives, when ſuch an event was leaſt expected, (to the ſurprize and amazement of their anti-chriſtian enemies) and appears in ſuch ſtrength, that the reformed are able to ſtand on their own legs, and to withſtand all the power and rage of the church of Rome. Preſently after this revival, the people of God are ſet on high, having the civil magiſtrate in many countries on their ſide, and henceforward have the power of many potent princes engaged for their protection. And this, in ſight of their enemies, and greatly to their grief and vexation; who, though they, from time to time, exert their utmoſt, never are able to prevail againſt them, to bring them

under any more, as they had done in former wars. Oftentimes, in ſcripture, God's church's dwelling in ſafety, out of the reach of their enemies, is repreſented by their dwelling on high, or being ſet on high; as Pſal. lix. 1. lxix. 29. xci. 14. cvii. 41. Prov. xxix. 25. Iſai. xxxiii. 16. The children of Iſrael, in their deliverance out of Egypt, from their cruel taſk-maſters, who would fain have brought them into bondage again, were ſaid *to be carried on eagle's wings*, which is lofty in its flight, flies away towards heaven, ſo that the Egyptians could not come at them; and they were protected by the cloud that went with them, as the witneſſes are ſaid to be caught up to heaven in a cloud. Compare this with Iſai. iv. 5. *And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her aſſemblies, a cloud and ſmoke by day, and the ſhining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory ſhall be a defence.*

I ſhall not pretend to explain the myſtery of the three days and a half of the witneſſes lying dead, or to determine the preciſe duration ſignified by that myſtical repreſentation. Poſſibly no particular meaſure of time may be intended by it, and yet it may not

be without ſignificancy.* As no particular number of perſons is intended by the two witneſſes, but, in general, it intends a ſmall number, and yet a ſufficient number; and as ſmall as might be, and yet be ſufficient; as leſs than two witneſſes was not ſufficient, ſo, perhaps, no particular duration of that low ſtate that the church was in before the Reformation, may be intended by three days and an half, but, in general, it may be hereby ſignified, that this time of the triumphing of the wicked, and extremity of God's church, ſhould be but ſhort. Poſſibly three days and an half may be mentioned, becauſe that is the utmoſt ſpace of time that a dead body can be ordinarily ſuppoſed to lie without putrefaction, ſignifying that at this time the church ſhould be brought to the very brink of utter ruin, and yet ſhould be preſerved, and revive again. And half a day may be mentioned to

NOTE.

* Mr. Lowman, in the preface to his Paraphraſe on the Revelation, page 8, obſerves as follows: *Prophetic numbers do not always expreſs a determinate duration, or ſpace of time, any more than they always expreſs a certain number. Prophecy, I acknowledge, uſes numbers ſometimes as other expreſſions, in a figurate meaning, as ſymbols and hieroglyphics. Thus the number* SEVEN *ſometimes does not denote the preciſe number ſeven; but figuratively denotes perfection, or a full and complete number; and the number ten ſometimes does not mean preciſely ten in number, but many in general, or a conſiderable number.*

ſignify the particular care of Providence in exactly determining this time of his church's extremity. And probably there may be ſome reference to the three times (or three years) and an half of the witneſſes propheſying in ſackcloth: the more apparently to ſhew the diſproportion between the time of the church's welfare, and the time of her enemies victory and triumph; the time of the church's affliction and conflict may be long, and in the iſſue ſhe may be overcome; but the time of this victory ſhall be but ſhort, in compariſon with the other, but as a day to a year; ſhe may, as it were, be killed, and lie dead, until ſhe comes to the very brink of utter and hopeleſs ruin, but yet God will not ſuffer her to ſee corruption; but at that very time, when her enemies expected that ſhe ſhould putrify, ſhe ſhall riſe, and be ſet on high, out of their reach, greatly to their aſtoniſhment.

The grand objection againſt all this is, that it is ſaid, that *the witneſſes ſhould propheſy twelve hundred and ſixty days cloathed in ſackcloth; and when they have finiſhed their teſtimony, the beaſt ſhould make war againſt them, and kill them,* &c. and that it ſeems manifeſt, that after this, they are no longer in

ſackcloth, for henceforward they are in an exalted ſtate in heaven; and that, therefore, ſeeing the time of their wearing ſackcloth is twelve hundred and fifty days, which is the time of the continuance of Antichriſt; hence their being ſlain and riſing again, muſt be at the concluſion of this period, and ſo at the end of Antichriſt's reign.

In anſwer to which I would ſay, that we can juſtly infer no more from this prophecy than this, viz. That the twelve hundred and ſixty days is the proper time of the church's trouble and bondage, or being cloathed in ſackcloth, becauſe it is the appointed time of the reign of Antichriſt. But this does not hinder but that God, out of his great compaſſion to his church, ſhould, in ſome reſpect, ſhorten the days, and grant that ſhe ſhould, in ſome meaſure, anticipate the appointed great deliverance that ſhould be at the end of thoſe days; as he has, in fact, done in the Reformation, whereby the church has had a great degree of reſtoration granted, from the darkneſs and power of Antichriſt, before her proper time of reſtoration, which is at the end of the twelve hundred and ſixty days. Thus the church of Chriſt, through the tender mercies of her Father and Redeemer, in

ſome reſpects, anticipates her deliverance from her ſorrows and ſackcloth; as many parts of the church are hereby brought from under the dominion of the anti-chriſtian powers, into a ſtate of power and liberty, though, in other reſpects, the church may be ſaid to continue in ſackcloth, and in the wilderneſs, until the end of the days; many parts of it ſtill remaining under grievous perſecution.

What we render, *When they ſhall have finiſhed their teſtimony*, Mr. Lowman, from Mr. Daubuz, renders, *While they ſhall perform their teſtimony;* and obſerves, that the original may mean the time of their teſtimony, as well as the end of it.

I might here obſerve, that we have other inſtances of God's ſhortening the days of his church's captivity and bondage, either at the beginning or end, very parallel with what has been now ſuppoſed in the caſe of the witneſſes. Thus the proper time of the bondage of the poſterity of Abraham in Egypt, was four hundred years, Gen. xv. 13. But yet God in mercy deferred the beginning of their bondage, whereby the time was much ſhortened at the beginning. So the time wherein it was foretold, that the *whole land of If-*

rael ſhould be a deſolation and an aſtoniſhment, and the land ſhould enjoy her ſabbaths, by the Babyloniſh captivity, was ſeventy years, Jer. xxv. 11, 12. and theſe ſeventy years are dated in 2d Chro. xxxvi. 20, 21. from Zedekiah's captivity; and yet, from that captivity to Cyrus's decree, was but fifty-two years; though it was indeed ſeventy years before the more full reſtoration of the Jewiſh church and ſtate by Darius's decree, Ezra vi. So the proper time of the oppreſſion and bondage of the Jewiſh church under Antiochus Epiphanes, wherein *both the ſanctuary and hoſt ſhould be trodden under foot by him, was two thouſand three hundred days*, Dan. viii. 13, 14. The time from Antiochus's taking Jeruſalem, and polluting the ſanctuary, to Antiochus's death, ſeems to have been about ſo long; but God ſhortened the days, by granting remarkable help to his people by means of the Maccabees, before that time; yea, the temple and ſanctuary were reſtored, and the altar rebuilt and dedicated before that time.

Upon the whole, I think there appears to be no reaſon from the prophecy concerning the two witneſſes, Rev. xi. to expect any ſuch general and terrible deſtruction of the church of Chriſt, before the utter downfal of

Antichriſt, as ſome have ſuppoſed, but good reaſon to determine the contrary. It is true, there is abundant evidence in ſcripture, that there is yet remaining a mighty conflict between the church and her enemies, the moſt violent ſtruggle of Satan and his adherents, in oppoſition to true religion, and the moſt general commotion that ever was in the world, ſince the foundation of it to that time; and many particular Chriſtians, and ſome parts of the church of Chriſt, may ſuffer hard things in this conflict; but, in the general, Satan and Antichriſt ſhall not get the victory, nor greatly prevail, but, on the contrary, be entirely conquered, and utterly overthrown, in this great battle. So that I hope this prophecy of the ſlaying of the witneſſes will not ſtand in the way of a compliance with the propoſal made to us in the memorial, as a prevalent objection and diſcouragement.

Object. 5. A late very learned and ingenious Expoſitor of the Revelation, viz. Mr. Lowman, ſets the fall of Antichriſt, and conſequently the coming of Chriſt's kingdom, at a great diſtance, ſuppoſing that the twelve hundred and ſixty years of Antichriſt's reign did not begin till the year ſeven hundred

and fifty-six; and consequently, that it will not end until after the year two thousand, more than two hundred and fifty years hence, and this opinion he confirms by a great variety of arguments.

Anſ. 1. If this objection be allowed to be valid, and that which ought to determine persons in an affair of this nature, and those things concerning God's people praying for this glorious event, be also allowed to be true, which before were shewn to be the will of God abundantly revealed in his word, then the following things must be supposed, viz. That it is the will of God that his people be much in prayer for this event, and particularly that it is God's revealed will and purpose, that, a little before the accomplishment of it, his people be earnestly seeking and waiting, and importunately and incessantly crying to God for it; but yet that it was God's design, that before this time comes of extraordinary prayer and importunity of his church, for the bringing on this glorious event, his church should have it given them to understand precisely when the appointed time should be, and that accordingly he has now actually brought the fixed time to light by means of Mr. Lowman.—

But is it reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that this ſhould be God's manner of dealing with his church, firſt to make known to them the preciſe time which he has unalterably fixed for the ſhewing this mercy to Zion, and then make it the duty of his church, in an extraordinary manner, to be, by prayer, enquiring of him concerning it, and ſaying—*How long, Lord!* and waiting for it, day and night, crying to him, with exceeding importunity, that he would bring it on, that he would come quickly, that he would hide himſelf no longer, but would ariſe and have mercy upon Zion, and awake as one out of ſleep, openly manifeſt himſelf, and make bare his holy arm for the ſalvation of his people? That *they that make mention of the Lord ſhould not keep ſilence, nor give him any reſt, until he eſtabliſh and make Jeruſalem a praiſe on the earth?* And that the church ſhould then ſay to Chriſt, *Make haſte, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart on the mountain of ſpices?*

It may be many ways for the comfort and benefit of God's church in her afflicted ſtate, to know that the reign of Antichriſt is to be no more than one thouſand two hundred and ſixty years; and ſome things in general

may be argued concerning the approach of it, when it is near: as the Jews could argue the approach of Chriſt's firſt coming, from Daniel's prophecy of the ſeventy weeks, though they knew not preciſely when that ſeventy weeks would end. But it is not reaſonable to expect that God ſhould make known to us beforehand, the preciſe time of Chriſt's coming in his kingdom. The diſciples deſired to know this, and manifeſted their deſire to their Lord, but he told them plainly, that *it was not for them to know the times and ſeaſons, which the Father hath put in his own power*, Acts i. 6, 7. and there is no reaſon to think that it is any more for us than for them, or for Chriſt's diſciples in theſe days, any more than for his apoſtles in thoſe days. God makes it the duty of his church to be importunately praying for it, and praying that it may come ſpeedily; and not only to be praying for it, but to be ſeeking for it, in the uſe of proper means, endeavouring that religion may now revive every where, and Satan's kingdom be overthrown; and always to be waiting for it, being in a conſtant preparation for it, as ſervants that wait for the coming of their lord, or virgins for the coming of the bridegroom,

not knowing at what hour he will come.—But God's making known beforehand the preciſe time of his coming, does not well conſiſt with theſe things.

It is the revealed will of God, that he ſhould be enquired of by his people, by extraordinary prayer, concerning this great mercy, to do it for them, before it be fulfilled. And if any ſuppoſe, that it is now found out preciſely when the time is to be, and (the time being at a conſiderable diſtance) that now is not a proper ſeaſon to begin this extraordinary prayer, I would, on this ſuppoſition, aſk—When we ſhall begin? How long before the fixed and known time of the beſtowment of this mercy comes, ſhall we begin to cry earneſtly to God that this mercy may come, and that Chriſt would make haſte and be like a roe, &c. For us to delay, ſuppoſing that we know the time to be far off, is not agreeable to the language of God's people in my text—*Come, let us go* SPEEDILY, *and pray before the Lord, and ſeek the Lord of Hoſts.*

Anſ. 2. I acknowledge that Mr. Lowman's Expoſition of the Revelation is, on many accounts, excellently written, giving great light

into ſome parts of that prophecy, and an inſtance of the fulfillment of that prediction, Dan. xii. 4. *Many ſhall run to and fro, and knowledge ſhall be increaſed;* and eſpecially in his Interpretation of the Five Firſt Vials, (which he ſuppoſeth already poured out) exceedingly ſatisfying. But yet the opinion of Mr. Lowman, with regard to the particular time of the beginning and end of the time, times, and an half of Antichriſt's reign, and of all others that pretend to fix the time, is the leaſt to be regarded, becauſe it is clearly revealed, and expreſsly declared by God, that that matter ſhall be ſealed up and hid, and not known until the time of the end of this time, times, and an half. Daniel, in the laſt chapter of his prophecy, gives us an account, how the angel told him of a future time of great trouble and affliction to the church of God, and then ſaid to him, ver. 4. *But thou, O Daniel,* SHUT UP THE WORDS, AND SEAL THE BOOK, EVEN TO THE TIME OF THE END. And then the prophet proceeds to give an account of a viſion that he had of one earneſtly enquiring of the angel of the Lord *how long it would be to the end* of this remarkable and wonderful time of the church's trouble, ſaying, *How long ſhall*

it be to the end of these wonders? ver. 5, 6. The answer was, that *it should be for a time, times, and an half*, and that when so long a time was past, then this wonderful affliction and scattering of the holy people should be finished, ver. 7. But then Daniel tells us, in the next verse, that *he heard, but he understood not*, and said, *O, my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?* He did not understand that general and mystical answer, that those things should have an end at the end of a time, times, and an half; he did not know by it, when this period would have an end; and therefore he enquires more particularly what the time of the end was. But the angel replies, ver. 9. *Go thy way, Daniel, the words are closed and sealed up, until the time of the end.* I do not know what could have been more express. The angel gently rebukes this over inquisitiveness of Daniel, very much as Christ did a like inquisitiveness of the disciples concerning the same matter, when he said to them—*It is not for you to know the times and seasons, that the Father hath put in his own power.*—I think there can be no doubt but that this space, of a time, times, and an half of the church's great trouble, about the end of which Daniel enquires,

is the ſame with that time, times, and half, that is ſpoken of, chap. vii. 25. and Rev. xii. 14. as the time of Antichriſt's reign, and the church's being in the wilderneſs, and not merely the time of the church's troubles by Antiochus Epiphanes. But we ſee, when Daniel has a mind to know particularly when this time would come to an end, he is bid to go away, and reſt contented in ignorance of this matter; for, ſays the man cloathed in linen, THE WORDS ARE CLOSED UP, AND SEALED, UNTIL THE TIME OF THE END. That is, very plainly, the matter that you enquire about, when the end of this time, and times, and half ſhall come, ſhall not be known, but be kept a great ſecret, until the time of the end actually comes, and all attempts to find it out before that ſhall be in vain. And therefore when a particular divine appears, that thinks he has found it out, and has unſealed this matter, and made it manifeſt with very manifold and abundant evidence, we may well think he is miſtaken, and doubt whether thoſe ſuppoſed evidences are truly ſolid ones, and ſuch as are indeed ſufficient to make that matter manifeſt, which God has declared ſhould be kept hid, and not made manifeſt before it is accom-

pliſhed. Mr. Lowman's own words in his preface, p. 24, 25. are here worthy to be repeated: "It will (ſays he) ever be a point "of wiſdom, not to be over buſy, or over "confident in any thing, eſpecially in fix- "ing periods of time, or determining ſea- "ſons, which it may be are not to be deter- "mined, it may be are not fit to be known. "It is a maxim, of greater wiſdom than is "uſually thought, *Seek not to know what "ſhould not be revealed.* Such are many "future events. The preciſe time of our Sa- "viour's coming to judgment, was not re- "vealed, becauſe not fit to be revealed.— "The uncertainty of his appearance was of "greater ſervice to preſerve a care of reli- "gion, than the revelation of it would have "been; for the uncertainty itſelf gives many "uſeful exhortations—*Watch, for ye know not "what hour the Son of Man cometh.* Sup- "poſe then ſome of the events deſcribed in "this prophecy ſhould be of doubtful ap- "plication; ſuppoſe the preciſe time of the "downfall of the beaſt, the ſlaying and re- "ſurrection of the witneſſes, and the begin- "ning of the thouſand years happy ſtate of "the church, ſhould not be ſo determined, "but it would admit of different calcula-

" tions; may it not be wiſe, and therefore " fit, it ſhould be ſo? The certainty of thoſe " events in a proper time, though that time " ſhould not be preciſely determined, will " anſwer the greater ends of uſeful inſtruc- " tion. And if the revelation ſhould go no " farther than this, it would yet be a revela- " tion, of great benefit and advantage, as the " certainty of the day of judgment in its pro- " per time ſurely is, though of that day and " hour knoweth no man."

Anſ. 3. Though it is not for us to know the preciſe time of the fall of Antichriſt, yet I humbly conceive that we have no reaſon to ſuppoſe the event principally intended, in the prophecies, of Antichriſt's deſtruction, to be at ſo great a diſtance, as Mr. Lowman places it, but have reaſon to think it to be much nearer. Not that I would ſet up myſelf as a perſon of equal judgment with Mr. Lowman in matters of this nature. As he differs from moſt others of the moſt approved expoſitors of the Apocalypſe, in this matter, ſo I hope it will not appear vanity and preſumption in me, to differ from this particular expoſitor, and to agree with the greater number. And ſince his opinion ſtands ſo much in the way of that great and import-

ant affair, to promote which is the very end of this whole diſcourſe, I hope it will not look as though I affected to appear conſiderably among the interpreters of prophecy, and as a perſon of ſkill in theſe myſterious matters, that I offer ſome reaſons againſt Mr. Lowman's opinions. It is ſurely a great pity, that it ſhould be received as a thing clear and abundantly confirmed, that the glorious day of Antichriſt's fall is at ſo great a diſtance, (ſo directly tending to damp and diſcourage all earneſt prayers for, or endeavours after its ſpeedy accompliſhment) unleſs there be good and plain ground for it. I would therefore offer ſome things to conſideration, which, I think, may juſtly make us look upon the opinion of this learned interpreter, of this happy event's being at ſo great a diſtance, not ſo certain and indubitable, as to hinder our praying and hoping for its being fulfilled much ſooner.

The period of Antichriſt's reign, as this author has fixed it, ſeems to be the main point inſiſted on in his Expoſition of the Revelation, which he ſuppoſes a great many things in the ſcheme of prophecies delivered in that book do concur to eſtabliſh. And, indeed, it is ſo, with reſpect to the ſcheme

of interpretation of theſe prophecies, which he goes into, and finds it requiſite to maintain, in order to confirm this point. But there are ſeveral things in that ſcheme, that appear to me juſtly liable to exception.

Whereas it is repreſented, Rev. xvii. 10, 11. that there are ſeven different ſucceſſive heads of the beaſt; that five were paſt, and another was to come, and to continue a ſhort ſpace, that might, on ſome accounts, be reckoned a ſeventh; and that Antichriſt was to follow next after this, as the eighth; but yet the foregoing not being properly one of the heads of the beaſt, he was properly the ſeventh. Mr. Lowman does not think with others, that by the ſeventh that was to continue a ſhort ſpace, which would not be properly one of the heads of the beaſt, is meant Conſtantine, and the other Chriſtian emperors; (for he thinks they are reckoned as properly belonging to the ſixth head of the beaſt) but that hereby is intended the government that Rome was ſubject to under the Gothic princes, and the exarchate of Ravenna, after the imperial form of government in Rome ceaſed in Auguſtulus, until the Pope was inveſted with his temporal dominion, called St. Peter's Patrimony,

by Pipin, king of France, in the year ſeven hundred and fifty-ſix. And he ſuppoſes, that that wounding of one of the heads of the beaſt with a ſword of death, that we read of, chap. xiii. 3 and 14. was not fulfilled in the deſtruction of the heathen empire, and the giving the imperial power unto Chriſtians, but in the deſtruction of the imperial form of government, by the ſword of the Goths, in the time of Auguſtulus. But it ſeems to me to be very unlikely, that the Spirit of God ſhould reckon Conſtantine and the Chriſtian emperors as proper members, and belonging to one of the heads, of that monſtrous wild and cruel beaſt, that is compared to a leopard and a bear, and a devouring lion, and that had a mouth ſpeaking great things and blaſphemies, and that rules by the power and authority of the dragon, or the devil;* which beaſt is repreſented in this 17th chapter, as full of names of blaſphemy, and of a bloody colour, denoting his exceeding cruelty in perſecuting the Chriſtian church. For Conſtantine, inſtead of

NOTE.

* The word *Therion* ſignifies a wild ſavage beaſt, as Mr. Lowman himſelf obſerves, page 127.

this was a member of the Chriſtian church, and ſet by God in the moſt eminent ſtation in his church, and was honoured above all other princes that ever had been in the world, as the great protector of his church, and her deliverer from the perſecuting power of that cruel ſcarlet-coloured beaſt. Mr. Lowman himſelf ſtyles him *a Chriſtian Prince, and Protector of the Chriſtian Religion.* God is very careful not to reckon his own people among the Gentiles, the viſible ſubjects of Satan, Num. xxiii. 9. *The people ſhall not be reckoned among the nations.* God will not enroll them with them; if they happen to be among them, he will be careful to ſet a mark upon them, as a note of diſtinction, Rev. vii. 3, &c. when God is reckoning up his own people, he leaves out thoſe that have been noted for idolatry. As among the tribes that were ſealed, Rev. viii. thoſe idolatrous tribes of Ephraim and Dan are left out, and in the genealogy of Chriſt, Matth. i. thoſe princes that were chiefly noted for idolatry, are left out. Much more would God be careful not to reckon his own people, eſpecially ſuch Chriſtian princes as have been the moſt eminent inſtruments of overthrowing idolatry, amongſt idolaters, and as members and

heads of that kingdom that is noted in ſcripture as the moſt notorious and infamous of all, for abominable idolatry, and oppoſition and cruelty to the true worſhippers of God. And eſpecially not to reckon them as properly belonging to one of thoſe ſeven heads of this monarchy, of which very heads it is particularly noted that they had on them the names of BLASPHEMY, which Mr. Lowman himſelf ſuppoſes to ſignify idolatry. It was therefore worthy of God, agreeable to his manner, and what might well be expected, that when he was reckoning up the ſeveral ſucceſſive heads of this beaſt, and Conſtantine and his ſucceſſors came in the way, and there was occaſion to mention them, to ſet a mark, or note of diſtinction on them, ſignifying that they did not properly belong to the beaſt, nor were to be reckoned as belonging to the heads, and therefore are to be ſkipped over in the reckoning, and Antichriſt, though the eighth head of the Roman empire, is to be reckoned the ſeventh head of the beaſt. This appears to me abundantly the moſt juſt and natural interpretation of Rev. xvii. 10, 11. It is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that God would take care to make ſuch a note in this prophetical deſcription

of this dreadful beaſt, and not, by any means to reckon Conſtantine as belonging properly to him.—If we reckon Conſtantine as a member of this beaſt having ſeven heads and ten horns, deſcribed chap. xvii. and as properly one of his heads, then he was alſo properly a member of the great red dragon with ſeven heads and ten horns that warred with the woman, chap. xii. For the ſeven heads and ten horns of that dragon, are plainly the ſame with the ſeven heads and ten horns of the beaſt. So that this makes Conſtantine a viſible member of the devil; for we are told expreſsly of that dragon, ver 9. that he was *that old ſerpent, called the Devil and Satan.* And to ſuppoſe that Conſtantine is reckoned as belonging to one of the heads of that dragon, is to make theſe prophecies inconſiſtent with themſelves. For here in this 12th chapter, we have repreſented a war between the dragon and the woman cloathed with the ſun; which woman, as all agree, is the church; but Conſtantine, as all do alſo agree, belonged to the woman, was a member of the Chriſtian church, and was on that ſide in the war againſt the dragon; yea, was the main inſtrument of that great victory that was obtained over the dragon there ſpo-

ken of, ver. 9—12. What an inconſiſtency therefore is it, to ſuppoſe that he was at the ſame time a member and head of that very dragon, which fought with the woman, and yet which Conſtantine himſelf fought with, overcame, and glorioufly triumphed over! It is not therefore to be wondered at, that God was careful to diſtinguiſh Conſtantine from the proper heads of the beaſt; it would have been a wonder if he had not. God ſeems to have been careful to diſtinguiſh him, not only in his word, but in his providence, by ſo ordering it that this Chriſtian emperor ſhould be removed from Rome, the city that God had given up to be the ſeat of the power of the beaſt, and of its heads, and that he ſhould have the ſeat of his empire elſewhere.

Conſtantine was made the inſtrument of giving a mortal wound to the heathen Roman empire, and giving it a mortal wound in its head, viz. the heathen emperors that were then reigning, Maxentius and Licinius.—But more eminently was this glorious change in the empire owing to the power of God's word, the prevalence of the glorious goſpel, by which Conſtantine himſelf was converted, and ſo became the inſtrument of the o-

verthrow of the heathen empire in the eaſt and weſt. The change that was then bro't to paſs, is repreſented as the deſtruction of the heathen empire, or the old heathen world, and therefore ſeems to be compared to that diſſolution of heaven and earth that ſhall be at the day of judgment, Rev. vi. 12. to the end. And therefore well might the heathen empire, under the head which was then reigning, be repreſented as wounded to death, chap. xiii. 3. It is much more likely, that the wound the beaſt had by a ſword, in his head, ſpoken of ver. 14. was the wound that the heathen empire had in its head, by that ſword which we read of, chap. i. 16. and xix. 15. that proceeds out of the mouth of Chriſt, than the wound that was given to the Chriſtian empire and emperor by the ſword of the heathen Goths. It is moſt likely that this deadly wound was by that ſword with which Michael made war with him, and overcame him, and caſt him to the earth, chap. xii. 9. and that the deadly wound which was given him, was given him at that very time. It is moſt likely, that the ſword that gave him this deadly wound, after which he ſtrangely revived, as though he roſe from the dead, was the ſame ſword with that which is ſpoken of,

as what ſhall at laſt utterly deſtroy him, ſo that he ſhall never riſe more, chap. xix. 15, 19, 20, 21. This wounding of the head of the beaſt by the deſtruction of the heathen empire, and converſion of the emperor to the Chriſtian truth, was a glorious event indeed of Divine Providence, worthy to be ſo much ſpoken of in prophecy. It is natural to ſuppoſe, that the mortal wounding of the head of that ſavage cruel beaſt, that is repreſented as conſtantly at war with the woman, and perſecuting the church of Chriſt, ſhould be ſome relief to the Chriſtian church; but, on the contrary, that wounding to death, that Mr. Lowman ſpeaks of, was the victory of the enemies of the Chriſtian church over her, and the wound received from them.

It is ſaid of that head of the empire that ſhall be next after the ſixth head, and next before Antichriſt, and that is not reckoned as properly one of the number of the heads of the beaſt, that *when it comes, it ſhall continue a ſhort ſpace*, chap. xvii. 10. By which we may underſtand, at leaſt, that it ſhall be one of the ſhorteſt, in its continuance, of the ſucceſſive heads. But the government ſeated at Ravenna, in the hands of the Goths, or of the deputies of the Greek emperors,

(which Mr. Lowman ſuppoſes to be meant by the head) continued, as Mr. Lowman himſelf takes notice, very near three hundred years. And if ſo, its continuance was one of the longeſt of the heads mentioned.

And beſides, if the government that Rome was under, from the time that Auguſtulus abdicated, to the time when the Pope was confirmed in his temporal dominion, was meant by the ſeventh head that was to be between the imperial head and the papal, there would doubtleſs have been two different heads mentioned, inſtead of one, between the Emperor and the Pope, viz. Firſt, the Gothic princes, which reigned near an hundred years. Secondly, the Exarchs of Ravenna, which governed for about one hundred and eighty-five years. The Gothic kingdom was much more properly a diſtinct government from the Imperial, than the Exarchate of Ravenna; for during the Exarchate, Rome was under the government of the emperor, as much as it was in Conſtantine's time.

In Rev. xvii. 12. it is ſaid, the *ten horns are ten kings, which are to receive power as kings one hour with the beaſt*, or (as Mr. Lowman ſays, it ought to have been tranſlated)

the ſame hour, or *point of time with the beaſt.* This will not allow the time when Antichriſt firſt receives power as king, to be ſo late as Mr. Lowman ſuppoſes. This diviſion of the empire into many kingdoms, denoted by the number ten, was about the year four hundred and fifty-ſix, after Genſericus had taken the city of Rome; but Mr. Lowman places the beginning of the reign of Antichriſt in the year ſeven hundred and fifty-ſix, which is three hundred years later. I know, ſuch an expreſſion as *in one hour*, or *the ſame hour*, may allow ſome latitude, but ſurely not ſuch a latitude as this. This is a much longer time, than it was from the time of the viſion to Conſtantine: much longer than the ſpace of all the firſt ſix ſeals, longer than it was from Chriſt's aſcenſion to Conſtantine, and near as long as the time of all the reigns of the heathen emperors put together, from Auguſtus Cæſar to Conſtantine. An hour is every where, in the other places in this book of Revelation, uſed to ſignify a very ſhort time, as may be ſeen in places cited in the margin.* And the expreſſion, *the ſame*

NOTE.

* Rev. xviii. 10, 17, 19. Chap. iii. 3, 10.—viii. 1.—ix. 15.—xiv. 7.

hour, every where elſe in the Bible, intends near the ſame point of time.† The phraſe *one hour* is uſed ſeveral times in the next chapter, ſpeaking of the downfall of Antichriſt;‡ and each time, evidently ſignifies a very ſhort ſpace of time. And there is no reaſon why we ſhould not underſtand the ſame phraſe in the ſame ſenſe, when it is uſed here concerning the riſe of Antichriſt.

Mr. Lowman greatly inſiſts upon it, that what is ſpoken as continuing one thouſand two hundred and ſixty days, is not ſo much any ſpiritual authority or eccleſiaſtical power of the Pope, over the nations of Chriſtendom, as his temporal government and dominion in that individual city of Rome, and therefore to determine when theſe one thouſand two hundred and ſixty days or years began, and when they will end, we muſt conſider when the Pope firſt received this his temporal power over the city of Rome, and the neighbouring regions, called St. Peter's Patrimony. But I can ſee no good reaſon for this. Indeed it is ſtrange, if it be ſo.—God has been pleaſed in theſe revelations

NOTES.

† Dan. iii. 6.—iv. 33.—v. 5. Matth. viii. 13.—x. 19.—Luke vii. 21.—xii. 12.—xx. 19.—xxiv. 33. John iv. 53. Acts xvi. 18, 33.—xxii. 13. Rev. xi. 13. ‡ Ver. 10, 17, 19.

and prophecies, which he has given for the benefit of his church in general, to ſpeak much concerning an anti-chriſtian power that ſhould ariſe, that ſhould *perſecute the ſaints, and ſcatter the power of the holy people*, and be an occaſion of great affliction to the church of Chriſt; and in theſe revelations, in both Old Teſtament and New, has declared, and often repeated it, that his dominion ſhall continue ſo long, and no longer; and for the comfort of his church in general, Chriſt hath ſworn with great ſolemnity, that the continuance of this perſecuting power ſhall be limited, Dan. xii. 7. Now it would be ſtrange if, in all this, the thing principally intended is not that dominion of this anti-chriſtian power which chiefly concerns the church of Chriſt in general, but merely his temporal dominion over one province in Italy, called St. Peter's Patrimony. Doubtleſs, that dominion of Antichriſt, which the prophecies inſiſt upon and deſcribe, is the dominion whoſe duration and limits thoſe prophecies declare. But the dominion of Antichriſt which the prophecies inſiſt upon and deſcribe, is not any dominion over a particular province in Italy, but the dominion by which he ſucceeds the four great

monarchies of the world, Dan. vii. The dominion by which he *ſucceeds the dragon in his power, throne and great authority*, Rev. xiii. 2. The dominion in which he has *power given him over all kindreds, tongues and nations*, ver. 7. The dominion by which *the great whore ſits on many waters*, chap. xvii. 1. which the angel explains to be *peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues*, ver. 15. and the dominion in which he *reigns over the ten kings*, into which the Roman empire is divided, Rev. xiii. 1. and xvii. 3, 12, 13. The beaſt that had ten horns, is not the city of Rome, and the neighbouring region, but the Roman empire; they are the horns or the kings, not of the city, but of the empire. If we conſider what is expreſſed in the paſſages themſelves, which ſpeak of the three years and an half of Antichriſt, they will lead us to underſtand ſomething very diverſe from the duration of his temporal dominion over St. Peter's Patrimony. In Dan. vii. 25. the time, times, and half of the little horn, is expreſsly the continuance of time, wherein *it ſhall be given to him to change times and laws, and wear out the ſaints of the Moſt High*; and in chap. xii. 7. it is ſpoken of as *the time of his ſcattering the*

power of the holy people; in Rev. xi. 2. the forty and two months is ſpoken of as the time of Antichriſt's *treading under foot the court of the temple and the holy city;* i. e. the external and viſible Chriſtian church abroad in the world, or the nations of Chriſtendom. In ver. 3. the one thouſand two hundred and ſixty days of Antichriſt are ſpoken of as the time of the *witneſſes propheſying in ſackcloth;* and in chap. xii. 6. and 14. the time of the *woman's being in the wilderneſs,* which was through the great power that Antichriſt had over the Chriſtian world, and not his ſmall temporal dominion in Italy.

It is true, ſome regard is had in the prophecies to the city of Rome, the city built on ſeven hills; which being the fountain of all rule and authority in the Roman monarchy, and the capital city in the empire, from whence the whole empire was denominated, and the place where the head of the empire uſually reſided, was properly made uſe of by the angel, Rev. xvii. 9, 18. to ſhew what empire Antichriſt ſhould rule over, and what city he ſhould uſually reſide in. And this is all that can be meant by the words of the angel; and not that thoſe ſtreets and walls, and the very ground, were ſuch main and

eſſential things in what the prophecy intended by the beaſt; that when Antichriſt's dominion ceaſes in that place, then the beaſt ceaſes. For, if ſo, then it will follow, that the beaſt had his head wounded to death a ſecond time, and ceaſed to be, when the Popes reſided at Avignon in France, for the beſt part of a century; when not only the Popes did not reſide in Rome, nor in any part of St. Peter's Patrimony, nor any part of Italy, but ſome of them were neither Romans nor Italians. Though the angel ſays of the great whore, Rev. xvii. 18. *The woman which thou ſaweſt, is the great city which reigns over the kings of the earth;* yet by the city, in this caſe, is not meant ſo much what was contained within thoſe Roman walls, as the Roman empire, as is evident by chap. xi. 8. *And their dead bodies ſhall lie in the ſtreet of the great city, which is ſpiritually called Sodom and Egypt.* Here, by that great city, neither Mr. L owman himſelf, nor, I ſuppoſe, any other Proteſtant interpreter, underſtands the city of Rome, ſtrictly ſpeaking, but the Roman monarchy.

And though it be true, as Mr. Lowman obſerves, the Pope's eccleſiaſtical monarchy, and power and influence through Chriſten-

dom, was greatly eſtabliſhed and advanced by Pepin's making him a temporal prince over the Exarchate of Ravenna; yet, I would aſk, whether the Pope's power and influence in the world, and his ability to diſturb the quiet of the nations of Chriſtendom, and (as it is expreſſed in Daniel) *to change times and laws*, and to carry his own deſigns, in the various countries and kingdoms of Europe, was not greater before Pepin, than it is now, and has been for a long time? And yet Mr. Lowman ſuppoſes that now is properly the time of Antichriſt's reign, that the one thouſand two hundred and ſixty years of his reign continues, and will continue for about two hundred and ſeventy years longer; tho' his power be now ſo ſmall, and has been declining ever ſince the reformation, and ſtill declines continually.

One thing that Mr. Lowman ſuppoſes confirms his opinion of ſo late a beginning of the one thouſand two hundred and ſixty years of the reign of the beaſt, is the order of the ſeveral periods of this prophecy, and the manner of their ſucceeding one another.

As to his particular ſcheme of the ſeven periods, ſo divided and limited, and ſo obviouſly ranked in ſuch order, and following

one another in ſuch direct and continual ſucceſſion, and each ending in a ſtate of peace, ſafety and happineſs to the church of God, it ſeems to me to be more ingenious than ſolid, and that many things might be ſaid to demonſtrate it not to be founded in the truth of things, and the real deſign of the divine author of this prophecy. But now to enter into a particular and full examination of it, would be to lengthen out this diſcourſe far beyond its proper limits. I would only obſerve, (which directly concerns my preſent purpoſe) that to make out this ſcheme, Mr. Lowman ſuppoſes that the fifth and ſixth trumpets, that bring on the two firſt woes, and the whole ninth chapter of the Revelation, altogether reſpects the Saracens. But it appears to me not very credible, that the Saracens ſhould have ſo much ſaid of them in this prophecy, as to have a whole chapter taken up about them, and not a word in the prophecy be ſaid about the Turks, who immediately ſucceeded them* in the ſame

NOTE.

* For though it be true, that the reign of Othman, or Ottoman, who began what they call the Ottoman empire, was a long time after this; yet the Turks themſelves, under other princes, in the government they ſet up in territories that had formerly been poſſeſſed by Chriſtians, and in their over-running and ravaging Chriſ-

religion, and proceeding on the ſame principles, and were ſo much more conſiderable, and brought vaſtly greater calamities on the Chriſtian world, and have ſet up and long maintained one of the greateſt, ſtrongeſt and moſt extraordinary empires that ever the world ſaw, and have been the moſt terrible ſcourge to Chriſtendom, that ever Divine Providence made uſe of, and one of the greateſt of all God's plagues on the world of mankind.

Mr. Lowman, in purſuance of his ſcheme, alſo ſuppoſes, (which is yet more incredible) this period of the trumpets ends in *a ſtate of ſafety, peace and happineſs to the church of God;* ſo that, on that occaſion, *there are great voices in heaven, ſaying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Chriſt.* And yet he ſuppoſes, that it iſſues in ſetting up the kingdom of Antichriſt; and that about that very time, when theſe heavenly voices ſo joyfully proclaimed this, the beaſt was enthroned, and the time, times and half, or one thouſand two

NOTE.

tian countries, immediately ſucceeding the Saracens; and from thenceforward have been a terrible, and almoſt continual ſcourge to the church.

hundred and ſixty days of his reign began, which is ſpoken of every where, as the time of the church's greateſt darkneſs and trouble, the time wherein *the little horn ſhould wear out the ſaints of the Moſt High. The time appointed for his ſcattering the power of the holy people. The time of the woman's being in the wilderneſs. The time of treading under foot the court of the temple.* And *the time of the witneſſes propheſying in ſackcloth.*

However, I do not deny that the time when Mr. Lowman ſuppoſes the reign of the beaſt began, even the time when Pepin confirmed to the Pope his temporal dominions in Italy, was a time of the great increaſe and advancement of the power of Antichriſt in the world, and a notable epoch. And if I may be allowed humbly to offer what appears to me to be the truth with relation to the riſe and fall of Antichriſt, it is this—As the power of Antichriſt, and the corruption of the apoſtate church, roſe not at once, but by ſeveral notable ſteps and degrees, ſo it will in the like manner fall; and that divers ſteps and ſeaſons of deſtruction to the ſpiritual Babylon, and revival and advancement of the true church, are propheſied of under one. Though it be true, that there is ſome

particular event, that prevails above all others in the intention of the prophecy, ſome remarkable ſeaſon of the deſtruction of the church of Rome, and the papal power and corruption, and advancement of true religion, that the prophecies have a principal reſpect to.

It was certainly thus with regard to the prophecies of the deſtruction of old Babylon, and the church's deliverance from captivity and oppreſſion by that city and kingdom, which is abundantly alluded to in theſe prophecies of the Revelation, as a noted type of the oppreſſion of the church of Chriſt by the church of Rome, calling the latter ſo often by the name of Babylon, and the church of Chriſt Jeruſalem. The captivity of the Jews by the Babylonians was not perfected at once, but was brought on by ſeveral notable ſteps. So neither was the reſtoration of the Jewiſh church, after the captivity, perfected at once. It was ſeveral times foretold, that the duration of the captivity ſhould be ſeventy years; and alſo, that after ſeventy years were accompliſhed, God would deſtroy Babylon. But this period had manifeſtly ſeveral different beginnings, and ſeveral endings. Thus from Jehoiakim's capti-

vity to Cyrus's decree, for the return of the Jews, and the rebuilding of Jeruſalem, was ſeventy years. And from Zedekiah's captivity to Darius's decree ſeventy years. And from the laſt carrying away of all, to the finiſhing and dedication of the temple, was alſo ſeventy years. So alſo the prophecies of Babylon's deſtruction were fulfilled by ſeveral ſteps. Theſe prophecies ſeem to have a principal reſpect to that deſtruction that was accompliſhed by Cyrus, at the end of the firſt ſeventy years fore-mentioned; but there were other things in the very ſame prophecies, that were not fulfilled until the fourth year of Darius, when what remained of Babylon was ſubjected to another dreadful deſtruction, which, in a great meaſure, completed its deſolation, which was at the end of the ſecond ſeventy years, and at the ſame time that the reſtoration of the Jews was perfected by the decree of Darius.*—But yet, there were many other things contained in the ſame prophecies of Babylon's deſtruction, rendering it thenceforward perfectly and perpetually deſolate, and the haunt

NOTE.

* Prideaux's Connection, part I. p. 183, 184, and 267, 268, 269. Edit. 9, and p. 271 and 272.

of ſerpents and wild beaſts, that were not fulfilled until more than two hundred years after, in the time of Seleucus king of Syria.* So alſo it was with reſpect to the prophecies of the deſtruction of Tyre, in the xxvith, xxviith and xxviiith chapters of Ezek. from which many of the expreſſions uſed in the Revelation, concerning the deſtruction of the kingdom of Antichriſt, are taken, and which is evidently made uſe of in ſcripture as a type of the latter. Theſe prophecies of the deſtruction of Tyre were fulfilled by various ſteps. Many things were fulfilled in the deſtruction of the old city by Nebuchadnezzar,† and yet other parts of the ſame prophecies were fulfilled by Alexander,‡ which was about two hundred and forty years afterwards. And yet both theſe deſolations are propheſied of under one.

And thus it ſeems to me very probable, that it will prove, with reſpect to the prophecies of the deſtruction of myſtical Babylon. It is, I think, pretty manifeſt by the prophecies, that this anti-chriſtian hierarchy and apoſtate church will at laſt be ſo deſtroyed, that there ſhall be no remainders of

NOTES.

* Prid. Connect. Part I. p. 808—812. † Ibid. 128, 129, 130. ‡ Ibid. p. 693.

it left, and ſhall have as perfect a deſolation, before God has done with her, as old Babylon had; there ſhall be no ſuch thing as Pope or church of Rome in the world.* It ſeems alſo pretty manifeſt, that after that event that is chiefly intended in the prophecies of Antichriſt's deſtruction, there will be ſome remains of the Romiſh church. This appears by that moſt particular and large deſcription of that deſtruction, Rev. xviii. There it ſeems to be implied, not only that many ſhall yet remain of the church of Rome, that ſhall bewail her overthrow, of her people and clergy, but that there ſhould be ſome princes among them, *Kings of the earth, that have committed fornication, and lived deliciouſly with her.* And it is exceeding improbable in itſelf, that every Papiſt, in each quarter of the world, ſhould be deſtroyed, or ceaſe from the world, at one blow. And as long as ſo conſiderable a number remains, as may be gathered from the prophecy, they will doubtleſs have an hierarchy, and there will be one among them that will bear the name of a Pope, although the church of Rome ſhall be mainly deſtroyed, and the intereſt of Popery ſhall be ſunk very low in the world,

NOTE.

* See Rev. xviii. 21—23. and xix. 20, 21. Dan. vii. 26, 27.

ſo that there will yet remain ſuch a thing as a papal church and hierarchy in the world, to be wholly extirpated at another period,* ſometime after that great overthrow principally inſiſted on in the prophecies. And this ſecond deſtruction of Antichriſt, or rather extirpation of his remains, together with the complete extirpation of all remains of mahometaniſm, heatheniſm and hereſy thro' the world, and the finiſhing ſtroke towards the overthrow of Satan's viſible kingdom on earth, and ſo the beginning of the Millennium, or ſpiritual reſt of the world, may, for ought I know, be about the time Mr. Lowman ſpeaks of; agreeable to the opinion of the ancient Jews, and many Chriſtian divines that have followed them, that the world would ſtand ſix thouſand years, and then, the ſeventh thouſand years ſhould be the world's reſt or ſabbath. The ruin of the Popiſh intereſt is but a ſmall part of what is requiſite, in order to introduce and ſettle ſuch a ſtate of things, as the world is repreſented as being in, in that Millennium that is deſcribed, Rev. xx. wherein Satan's viſible kingdom is every where totally extir-

NOTE.

* At the pouring out of the ſeventh vial upon the air, the principalities and powers of Satan.

pated, and a perfect end put to all hereſies, deluſions, and falſe religions whatſoever, through the whole earth, and Satan henceforward *deceives the nations no more*, and has no place any where but in hell. This is the ſabbatiſm of the world, when all ſhall be in a holy reſt; when the wolf ſhall dwell with the lamb, and there ſhall be nothing to hurt or offend, and there ſhall be abundance of peace, and the earth ſhall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the ſeas, and God's people ſhall dwell in quiet reſting-places. There is not the leaſt reaſon to think, that all this will be brought to paſs as it were at one ſtroke, or that from the preſent lamentable ſtate of things, there ſhould be brought about and completed the deſtruction of the church of Rome, the entire extirpation of all infidelity, hereſies ſuperſtitions and ſchiſms, through all Chriſtendom, and the converſion of all the Jews, and the full enlightening and converſion of all Mahometan and heathen nations, thro' the whole earth, on every ſide of the globe, and from the north to the ſouth pole, and the full ſettlement of all in the pure Chriſtian faith and order, all as it were in the iſſue of one battle, and by means of the vic-

tory of the church in one great conflict with her enemies. This would contradict many things in ſcripture, which repreſent this great event to be brought to paſs by a gradual progreſs of religion; as leaven that gradually ſpreads, until it has diffuſed itſelf, through the whole lump, and a plant of muſtard, which from a very ſmall ſeed, gradually becomes a great tree. *And like ſeed which a man caſts upon the ground, that ſprings and grows up, night and day; and firſt brings forth the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.* And eſpecially would this contradict the prophetical repreſentation in Ezek. xlvii. where the progreſs of religion is repreſented by the gradual increaſe of the waters of the ſanctuary; being firſt a ſmall ſpring iſſuing out from under the threſhold of the temple, and then after they had run a thouſand cubits, being up to the ankles; and at the end of another thouſand cubits, up to the knees; and at the end of another thouſand, up to the loins; and afterwards a great river, that could not be paſſed over; and being finally brought into the ſea, and healing the waters even of the vaſt ocean. If the Spirit of God ſhould be immediately poured out,

and that work of God's power and grace ſhould now begin, which, in its progreſs and iſſue, ſhould complete this glorious effect; there muſt be an amazing and unparalleled progreſs of the work and manifeſtation of divine power to bring ſo much to paſs, by the year two thouſand. Would it not be a great thing, to be accompliſhed in one half century, that religion, in the power and purity of it, ſhould ſo prevail, as to gain the conqueſt over all thoſe many things that ſtand in oppoſition to it among Proteſtants, and gain the upper hand through the Proteſtant world? And if in another, it ſhould go on ſo to prevail, as to get the victory over all the oppoſition and ſtrength of the kingdom of Antichriſt, ſo as to gain the aſcendancy in that which is now the Popiſh world? And if in a third half century, it ſhould prevail and ſubdue the greater part of the Mahometan world, and bring in the Jewiſh nation, in all their diſperſions? And when in the next whole century, the whole heathen world ſhould be enlightened and converted to the Chriſtian faith, throughout all parts of Africa, Aſia, America and Terra Auſtralis, and be thoroughly ſettled in Chriſtian faith and order, without any remainders

of their old deluſions and ſuperſtitions, and this attended with an utter extirpation of the remnant of the church of Rome, and all the relicts of mahometaniſm, hereſy, ſchiſm and enthuſiaſm, and a ſuppreſſion of all remains of open vice and immorality, and every ſort of viſible enemy to true religion, through the whole earth, and bring to an end all the unhappy commotions, tumults, and calamities occaſioned by ſuch great changes, and all things be ſo adjuſted and ſettled through the world, that the world henceforward ſhould enjoy an holy reſt or ſabbatiſm.

I have thus diſtinguiſhed what belongs to a bringing of the world from its preſent ſtate, to the happy ſtate of the Millennium, the better to give a view of the greatneſs of the work; and not, that I pretend ſo much as to conjecture, that things will be accompliſhed juſt in this order. The whole work is not the leſs great and wonderful, to be accompliſhed in ſuch a ſpace of time, in whatever order the different parts of it ſucceed each other. They that think that what has been mentioned would not be ſwift progreſs, yea, amazingly ſwift, do not conſider how great the work is, and the vaſt and innumerable obſtacles that are in the way. It was

a wonderful thing, when the Chriſtian religion, after Chriſt's aſcenſion, ſo prevailed, as to get the aſcendancy in the Roman empire in about three hundred years, but that was nothing to this.

Anſ. 4. There are, as I apprehend, good reaſons to hope, that that work of God's Spirit will begin in a little time, which in the progreſs of it will overthrow the kingdom of Antichriſt, and, in its iſſue, deſtroy Satan's viſible kingdom on earth.

The prophecy of the ſixth Vial, Rev. xvi. 12—16. if we take it in its connection with the other Vials, and conſider thoſe providential events, by which the preceding Vials have manifeſtly been fulfilled, I humbly conceive, affords juſt ground for ſuch a hope.

It is very plain, from this whole chapter, as alſo the preceding and following, that all theſe ſeven Vials are Vials of God's wrath on Antichriſt; one is not poured out on the Jews, another on the Turks, another on Pagans, another on the church of Rome; but they all ſignify God's ſucceſſive judgments or plagues on the beaſt and his kingdom, which is in this chapter and almoſt every where in this book, called GREAT BABYLON. And therefore undoubtedly, when it is ſaid, *The*

ſixth angel poured out his Vial on the river Euphrates, and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the eaſt might be prepared. By the river Euphrates is meant ſomething ſome way appertaining to this myſtical Babylon, as that river that ran thro' Chaldea, called Euphrates, was ſomething appertaining to the literal Babylon. And it is very manifeſt, that here is in the prophecy of this Vial an alluſion to that by which the way was prepared for the deſtruction of Babylon by Cyrus, which was by turning the channel of the river Euphrates, which ran through the midſt of the city, whereby the way of the kings of the eaſt, the princes of Media and Perſia, was prepared to come in under the walls of the city, at each end, where the waters uſed to run, and deſtroy it; as they did that night wherein Daniel interpreted the hand-writing on the wall, againſt Belſhazzar, Dan. v. 30. The prophecies of Babylon's deſtruction do, from time to time, take notice of this way of deſtroying her, by drying up the waters of the river Euphrates, to prepare the way for her enemies, Iſai. xliv. 27, 28. *That ſaith to the deep—Be dry—and I will dry up thy rivers; that ſaith of Cyrus—He is my ſervant, and*

ſhall perform all my pleaſure. Jer. li. 31, 32. *One poſt ſhall run to meet another, to ſhew the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end, and that the paſſages are ſtopped, and the reeds they have burnt with fire, and the men of war are affrighted.* And ver. 36. *I will dry up her ſea, and make her ſprings dry.*— The Medes and Perſians, the people that deſtroyed Babylon, dwelt to the eaſtward of Babylon, and are ſpoken of as coming from the eaſt to her deſtruction, Iſai. xlvi. 11. *Calling a ravenous bird from the* EAST, *the man that executeth my counſel, from a far country.* And the princes that joined with this ravenous bird from the eaſt, in this affair of deſtroying Babylon, are called kings, Jer. li. 11. *The Lord hath raiſed up the ſpirit of the* KINGS *of the Medes; for his device is againſt Babylon to deſtroy it.* Ver. 28. *Prepare againſt her the nations, with the* KINGS *of the Medes, the captains thereof, and the rulers thereof.*—The drying the channel of the river Euphrates, to prepare the way for theſe kings and captains of the eaſt, to enter into that city, under its high walls, was the laſt thing done by the beſiegers of Babylon, before her actual deſtruction; as this ſixth Vial is the laſt Vial of God's wrath but one,

on the myſtical Babylon, and the effect of it, the drying up the channel of the river Euphrates, is the laſt thing done againſt it, before its actual deſtruction by the ſeventh Vial, and opens the way for thoſe that fight in a ſpiritual war againſt it, ſpeedily to bring on its ruin.

Hence I think it may, without diſpute, be determined, that by the river Euphrates in the prophecy of this Vial, is meant ſomething appertaining or relating to the myſtical Babylon, or the anti-chriſtian church and kingdom, that ſerves that, or is a benefit to it, in a way anſwerable to that in which the river Euphrates ſerved old Babylon, and the removal of which will in like manner prepare the way for her enemies to deſtroy her. And therefore what we have to do in the firſt place, in order to find out what is intended by the river Euphrates, in this prophecy, is to conſider how the literal Euphrates ſerved old Babylon. And it may be noted, that Euphrates was of remarkable benefit to that great city in two reſpects; it ſerved the city as a ſupply—it was let thro' the midſt of the city by an artificial canal, and ran through the midſt of the palace of the king of Babylon; that part of his pa-

lace called the Old Palace, ſtanding on one ſide, and the other part called the New Palace, on the other; with communications from one part to another, above the waters, by a bridge, and under the waters, by a vaulted or arched paſſage, that the city, and eſpecially the palace, might have the convenience of its waters, and be plentifully ſupplied with water. And another way that the waters of Euphrates ſerved Babylon, was as an impediment and obſtacle in the way of its enemies, to hinder their acceſs to it to deſtroy it; for there was a vaſt moat round the city, without the walls, of prodigious width and depth, filled with the water of the river, to hinder the acceſs of her beſiegers; and at each end of the city, the river ſerved inſtead of walls. And therefore when Cyrus had dried up the river, the moat was emptied, and the channel of the river under the walls left dry, and ſo his way was prepared.

And therefore it is natural to ſuppoſe, that by drying up the waters of the river Euphrates, in the prophecy of the deſtruction of the new Babylon, to prepare the way of her enemies, is meant the drying up her incomes and ſupplies, and the removal of

thoſe things that hitherto have been the chief obſtacles in the way of thoſe that, in this book, are repreſented as at war with her, and ſeeking her deſtruction, (ſpoken of Rev. xix. 11. to the end, and chap. xii. 7.) that have hindered their progreſs and ſucceſs, or that have been the chief impediments in the way of the Proteſtant religion. The firſt thing is the drying the ſtreams of the wealth of the new Babylon, the temporal ſupplies, revenues, and vaſt incomes of the Romiſh church, and the riches of the Popiſh dominions. Waters in ſcripture language very often ſignify proviſion and ſupplies, both temporal and ſpiritual, as in Prov. ix. 17. Iſai. xxxiii. 16.—xliii. 20.—lv. 1. and lviii. 11. Jer. ii. 13 and 18.—xvii. 8 and 13. and in other places innumerable. The temporal ſupplies of a people are very often in ſcripture called waters, as Iſai. v. 13. *Therefore my people is gone into captivity, and their honourable men are famiſhed, and their multitude dried up with thirſt,* i. e. deprived of the ſupports and ſupplies of life. And the drying up the waters of a city or kingdom, is often uſed in ſcripture prophecy, for the depriving them of their wealth, as the ſcrip-

ture explains itſelf, Hoſ. xiii. 15. *His ſprings ſhall become dry, and his fountain ſhall be dried up: He ſhall ſpoil the treaſure of all pleaſant veſſels.* Iſai. xv. 6, 7. *The waters of Nimrim ſhall be deſolate, for the hay is withered, the graſs faileth, there is no green thing.— Therefore the abundance they have gotten, and that which they have laid up, ſhall they carry away to the brook of the willows.* By the brook of the willows there ſeems to be a reference to the waters of Aſſyria or Chaldea, whoſe ſtreams abounded with willows. So that the carrying away the treaſures of Moab, and adding of them to the treaſures of Aſſyria, is here repreſented by the figure of turning away the waters of Nimrim from the country of Moab, and adding them to the waters of Aſſyria, as the prophecy explains itſelf. Yea, even in the prophecies of the deſtruction of Babylon itſelf, the depriving her of her treaſures, ſeems to be one thing intended by the drying up of her waters.— This ſeems manifeſt by the words of the prophecy in Jer. l. 37, 38. *A ſword is upon her treaſures, and they ſhall be robbed; a drought is upon her waters, and they ſhall be dried up.* Compared with chap. li. 15. *O thou that dwelleſt upon many waters, abundant in trea-*

ſures; with ver. 36. *I will dry up her ſea, and make her ſprings dry.* The wealth, revenues, and vaſt incomes of the church of Rome, are the waters by which that Babylon has been nouriſhed and ſupported; theſe are the waters which the Popiſh clergy and members of the Romiſh hierarchy thirſt after, and are continually drinking down, with inſatiable appetite; and they are waters that have been flowing into that ſpiritual city like a great river; eccleſiaſtical perſons poſſeſſing a very great part of the Popiſh dominions; as this Babylon is repreſented as vaſtly rich, in the prophecy of the Apocalypſe, eſpecially in the 17th and 18th chapters. Theſe are eſpecially the waters that ſupply the palace of the king of this new Babylon, viz. the Pope, as the river Euphrates ran through the midſt of the palace of the king of old Babylon. The revenues of the Pope have been like waters of a great river, coming into his palace, from innumerable fountains, and by innumerable branches and leſſer ſtreams, coming from many various and diſtant countries.

This prophecy repreſents to us two cities very contrary the one to the other—viz. New Babylon and the New Jeruſalem, and

a river running through the midſt of each. —The New Jeruſalem, which ſignifies the church of Chriſt, eſpecially in her beſt eſtate, is deſcribed as having a river running thro' the midſt of it, Rev. xxii. 1, 2. This river, as might eaſily be made moſt evident, by comparing this with abundance of other ſcriptures, undoubtedly ſignifies the divine ſupplies, and rich and abundant ſpiritual incomes and proviſion of that holy city. Mr. Lowman, in his late Expoſition, ſays, "It "repreſents a conſtant proviſion for the com- "fortable and happy life of all the inhabi- "tants of this city of God." And in his notes on the ſame place, obſerves as follows: "Water, (ſays he), as neceſſary to the ſup- "port of life, and as it contributes in great "cities, eſpecially in hot eaſtern countries, "to the ornament of the place, and delight "of the inhabitants, is a very proper repre- "ſentation of the enjoyment of all things, "both for the ſupport and pleaſure of life." As the river that runs through the new Jeruſalem, the church of Chriſt, that refreſhes that holy ſpiritual ſociety, ſignifies their ſpiritual ſupplies, to ſatisfy their ſpiritual thirſt, ſo the river that runs through the new Babylon, the anti-chriſtian church, that wick-

ed carnal ſociety, ſignifies, according to the oppoſite character of the city, her worldly, carnal ſupplies, to ſatisfy their carnal deſires and thirſtings.

This new Jeruſalem is called in this book the Paradiſe of God, and therefore is repreſented as having the tree of life growing in it. And it being deſcribed, as though a river ran through the midſt of it, there ſeems to be ſome alluſion to the ancient paradiſe in Eden, of which we are told that there ran a river through the midſt of it to water it; *i. e.* to ſupply the plants of it with nouriſhment. And this river was this very ſame river Euphrates, that afterwards ran through Babylon. And in one and the other, it repreſented the divers ſupplies of two oppoſite cities; in Eden, it repreſented the ſpiritual ſupplies and wealth of the true Chriſtian church, in her ſpiritual advancement and glory, and ſeems to be ſo made uſe of, Rev. xxii. 1, 2. In the other it repreſented the outward carnal ſupplies of the falſe antichriſtian church, in her worldly pomp and vain glory, chap. xvi. 12.

When the waters, that ſupply this myſtical Babylon, come to be dried up in this ſenſe, it will prepare the way for the ene-

mies of anti-chriſtian corruption, that ſeek her overthrow. The wealth of the church of Rome, and of the powers that ſupport it, is very much its defence. After the ſtreams of her revenues and riches are dried up, or very greatly diminiſhed, her walls will be as it were broken down, and ſhe will become weak and defenceleſs, and expoſed to eaſy ruin.

When Joab had taken that part of the city of Rabbah, that was called the City of Waters, whence the city had its ſupply of water, the fountains of the brook Jabbok being probably there, and which was alſo called the royal city, probably becauſe there the king had his palace and gardens, on the account of its peculiar pleaſantneſs; I ſay, when he had taken this, the conqueſt of the reſt of the city was eaſy; his meſſage to David implies, that the city now might be taken at pleaſure, 2 Sam. xii. 27, 28. It is poſſible that by the pouring out of the ſixth Vial to dry up the river of the myſtical Babylon, there might be ſomething like the taking the City of Waters in Rabbah; ſome one of the chief of the Popiſh powers, that has been the main ſtrength and ſupport of the Popiſh cauſe, or from whence that church

has its chief ſupplies, may be deſtroyed, or converted, or greatly reduced. But this events muſt determine.

In the prophecies of Egypt's deſtruction, it is ſignified, that when their rivers and waters ſhould be dried up, in that ſenſe, that the ſtreams of their temporal ſupplies ſhould be averted from them, their defence would be gone, Iſai. xix. 4, &c. *The Egyptians will I give over into the hand of a cruel lord, and the waters ſhall fail from the ſea, and the river ſhall be waſted and dried up, and the brooks of* DEFENCE *ſhall be emptied and dried up, and the reeds and flags ſhall wither— Every thing ſown by the brooks ſhall wither: The fiſhers alſo ſhall mourn—*

Thoſe whoſe way was prepared to come in and deſtroy Babylon, by the drying up the river of Euphrates, were the army that was at war with Babylon, Cyrus the king, and his hoſt, that fought her overthrow; ſo there ſeems to be all reaſon to ſuppoſe, that thoſe whoſe way will be prepared to come in and deſtroy myſtical Babylon, by drying up the myſtical Euphrates, are that king and army that are, in this book of Revelation, repreſented as at war with Antichriſt. And what king and army that is, we may ſee in

chap. xii. 7. and xix. 11. to the end—Michael the king of angels, and his angels; he *whoſe name is called the Word of God, and that has on his veſture, and on his thigh, a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; and the heavenly armies that follow him, cloathed in fine linen, white and clean.* Cyrus, the chief of the kings of the eaſt, that deſtroyed Babylon, and redeemed God's church from thence, and reſtored Jeruſalem, ſeems, in that particular affair, very manifeſtly to be ſpoken of as a type of Chriſt: God calls him *his ſhepherd, to perform his pleaſure, to ſay to Jeruſalem—Thou ſhalt be built, and to the temple—Thy foundation ſhall be laid.* God calls him his Meſſiah. *Thus ſaith the Lord to his anointed,* (in the original *to his Meſſiah*) *to Cyrus.* He is ſpoken of as one *that God had raiſed up in righteouſneſs, that he might build his city, and freely redeem his captives, or let them go without price or reward.* He is ſaid to be one whom *God had loved;* in like manner as the Meſſiah is ſaid to be *God's elect, in whom his ſoul delighteth.* As by Babylon, in the Revelation, is meant that anti-chriſtian ſociety that is typified by old Babylon; ſo by the kings of the eaſt, that ſhould deſtroy this anti-

chriſtian church, muſt be meant thoſe enemies of it that were typified by Cyrus, and other chieftians of the eaſt, that deſtroyed old Babylon; viz. Chriſt, who was born, lived, died, and roſe in the eaſt, together with thoſe ſpiritual princes that follow him, the principalities and powers in heavenly places, and thoſe miniſters and ſaints that are kings and prieſts, and ſhall reign on earth; eſpecially thoſe leaders and heads of God's people—thoſe Chriſtian miniſters and magiſtrates, that ſhall be diſtinguiſhed as public bleſſings to his church, and chief inſtruments of the overthrow of Antichriſt.

As the river Euphrates ſerved the city of Babylon as a ſupply, ſo it alſo was before obſerved, it ſerved as an impediment or obſtacle to hinder the acceſs of its enemies; as there was a vaſt moat round the city, filled with the water of the river, which was left empty when Euphrates was dried up. And therefore we may ſuppoſe, that another thing meant by the effect of the ſixth Vial, is the removal of thoſe things which hitherto have been the chief obſtacles in the way of the progreſs of the true religion, and the victory of the church of Chriſt over her enemies;

which have been the corrupt doctrines and practices that have prevailed in Proteſtant countries, and the doubts and difficulties that attend many doctrines of the true religion, and the many diviſions and contentions that ſubſiſt among Proteſtants. The removal of thoſe would wonderfully prepare the way for Chriſt and his armies, to go forward and prevail againſt their enemies, in a glorious propagation of true religion. So that this Vial, which is to prepare the way for Chriſt and his people, ſeems to have reſpect to that remarkable preparing the way for Chriſt, by *levelling mountains, exalting valleys, drying up rivers,* and *removing ſtumbling-blocks,* which is often ſpoken of in the prophecies, as what ſhall next precede the church's latter-day glory, as Iſai. xlii. 13, &c. *The Lord ſhall go forth as a mighty man; he ſhall ſtir up jealouſy as a man of war; he ſhall prevail againſt his enemies.—I will make waſte mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers iſlands, and I will dry up the pools; and I will bring the blind by a way that they know not, and I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkneſs light before them, and crooked things ſtraight: theſe things will I do*

unto them, and not forſake them. Chap. xl. 3, 4, 5. *Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make ſtraight in the deſart an high-way for our God: every valley ſhall be exalted, and every mountain and hill ſhall be made low, and the crooked ſhall be made ſtraight, and rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord ſhall be revealed, and all fleſh ſhall ſee it together.* Chap. xi. 15, 16. *And the Lord ſhall deſtroy the tongue of the Egyptian ſea, and with his mighty wind ſhall he ſhake his hand over the river, and ſhall ſmite it in the ſeven ſtreams thereof, and make men go over dry ſhod; and there ſhall be an high-way for the remnant of his people which ſhall be left, from Aſſyria, like as it was to Iſrael, in the day that he came out of the land of Egypt.* Chap. lvii. 14. *Caſt ye up, caſt ye up, prepare the way, take up the ſtumbling-block out of the way of my people.* And chap. lxii. 10. *Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; caſt up, caſt up the high-way; gather out the ſtones; lift up a ſtandard for the people.* Zech. x. 10, 11, 12. *I will bring them again alſo out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Aſſyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; and place ſhall not be found for them. And*

he shall paſs through the ſea with affliction, and shall ſmite the waves of the ſea; and all the deeps of the river shall dry up; and the pride of Aſſyria shall be brought down, and the ſceptre of Egypt shall depart away: And I will ſtrengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in his name, ſaith the Lord. And it is worthy to be remarked, that as Cyrus's deſtroying Babylon, and letting go God's captives from thence, and reſtoring Jeruſalem, is certainly typical of Chriſt's deſtroying myſtical Babylon, and delivering his people from her tyranny, and glorioufly building up the ſpiritual Jeruſalem in the latter days; ſo God's preparing Cyrus's way, by drying up the river Euphrates, is ſpoken of in terms like thoſe that are uſed in thoſe prophecies that have been mentioned, to ſignify the preparing Chriſt's way, when he ſhall come to accompliſh the latter event. Thus God ſays concerning Cyrus, Iſai. xlv. 2. *I will go before thee, and* MAKE CROOKED PLACES STRAIGHT. And ver. 13. *I will direct,* or *make ſtraight* (as it is in the margin) *all his ways.* This is like chap. xl. 2, 4. *Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make ſtraight in the deſart an high-way for our God.—The crooked things ſhall be made ſtraight.* Chap.

xlii. 16. *I will make darkneſs light before them, and crooked things ſtraight.*

If any ſhould object againſt underſtanding the river Euphrates, in Rev. xvi. 12. as ſignifying what has been ſuppoſed, that when mention is made of the river Euphrates, in another place in this prophecy, it is manifeſtly not ſo to be underſtood, viz. in chap. ix. 14. *Saying to the ſixth angel which had the trumpet—Looſe the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates;* and that there is no reaſon to underſtand the river Euphrates in the viſion of the ſixth Vial, as ſignifying ſomething diverſe from what is meant by the ſame river in the viſion of the ſixth trumpet.

I anſwer, That there appears to me to be good reaſon for a diverſe underſtanding of the river Euphrates in theſe two different places; the diverſity of the ſcene of the viſion, and of the kind of repreſentation, in thoſe two divers parts of this prophecy, naturally leads to it, and requires it. It is in this book as in the Old Teſtament; when the river Euphrates is ſpoken of in the Old Teſtament, both in the hiſtories and prophecies, it is mentioned, with reſpect to the two-fold relation of that river, viz. 1ſt, with re-

gard to its relation to Babylon. And as it was related to that, it was ſomething belonging to that city, as its defence and ſupply, as has been repreſented. Thus the river Euphrates is ſpoken of in many places that have been already obſerved, and others that might be mentioned. 2dly. This river is ſpoken of with regard to its relation to the land of Iſrael, God's viſible people; and as it was related to that, it was its eaſtern boundary. It is ſo ſpoken of, Gen. xv. 18. Exod. xxiii. 31. Deut. i. 7. and xi. 24. Joſh. i. 4. 2 Sam. viii. 3. 1 Chron. xviii. 3. 1 Kings iv. 21. Ezra iv. 20. Agreeable to this diverſe reſpect or relation of this river, under which it is mentioned in the Old Teſtament, ſo muſt we underſtand it differently in different parts of the prophecy of this book of Revelation, according as the nature and ſubject of the viſion requires. In the xvth chapter, where the prophecy is about Babylon, and the viſion is of God's plagues on Babylon, preparing the way for her deſtruction, there, when the river Euphrates is mentioned, we are naturally and neceſſarily led to conſider it as ſomething belonging to Babylon, appertaining to the myſtical Babylon, as Euphrates did to old Babylon. But we cannot

underſtand it ſo in the ixth chapter, for there the prophecy is not about Babylon. To mention Euphrates there, as ſomething belonging to Babylon, would have been improper; for the nature of the viſion, and prophetical repreſentation, did not lead to it, nor allow it. John had had no viſion of Babylon; that kind of repreſentation had not been made to him; there is not a word ſaid about Babylon till we come to the ſecond part of this prophecy, after John had the viſion of the ſecond book, and Chriſt had ſaid to him—*Thou muſt prophecy again before peoples, and nations, and kings*, chap. xi. The ſcene of the viſion, in the former part of the prophecy, had been more eſpecially the land of Iſrael, and the viſion is concerning two ſorts of perſons there, viz. thoſe of the tribes of Iſrael that had the ſeal of God in their foreheads, and thoſe wicked apoſtate Iſraelites that had not this mark. Compare chap. vii. 3—8. and chap. ix. 4. The viſion in this ixth chapter, is of God's jndgments on thoſe of the tribes of Iſrael, or in the land of Iſrael, which had not the ſeal of God in their foreheads; and therefore when mention is made, ver. 14. of a judgment coming on them from the river Euphrates, this river is here ſpoken

of in the former reſpect, viz. with regard to its relation to the land of Iſrael, as its eaſtern border; and thereby we muſt underſtand that God would bring ſome terrible calamity on Chriſtendom from its eaſtern border, as he did when the Turks were let looſe upon Chriſtendom.

If theſe things that have been ſpoken of, are intended in the prophecy of the ſixth Vial, it affords, as I conceive, great reaſon to hope that the beginning of that glorious work of God's Spirit, which, in the progreſs and iſſue of it, will overthrow Antichriſt, and introduce the glory of the latter days, is not very far off.

Mr. Lowman has, I think, put it beyond all reaſonable doubt, that the fifth Vial was poured out in the time of the Reformation. It alſo appears ſatisfyingly, by his late Expoſition, that take one Vial with another, it has not been two hundred years from the beginning of one Vial to the beginning of another, but about one hundred and eighty years. But it is now two hundred and twenty years ſince the fifth Vial began to be poured, and it is a long time ſince the main effects of it have been finiſhed. And therefore if the ſixth Vial has not already began

to be poured out, it may well be ſpeedily expected.

But with regard to the firſt thing that I have ſuppoſed to be ſignified by the effect of this Vial, viz. The drying up the fountains and ſtreams of the wealth and temporal incomes and ſupplies of the antichriſtian church and territories, I would propoſe it to conſideration, whether or no many things that have come to paſs within theſe twenty years paſt, may not be looked upon as probable beginnings of a fulfilment of this prophecy; particularly what the kings of Spain and Portugal did ſome years ſince, when diſpleaſed with the Pope, forbidding any thenceforward going to Rome for inveſtitures, &c. thereby cutting off two great ſtreams of the Pope's wealth, from ſo great and rich a part of the Popiſh world; and its becoming ſo frequent a thing of late for Popiſh princes, in their wars, to make bold with the treaſure of the church, and to tax the clergy within their dominions, as well as laity; or which is equivalent, to oblige them to contribute great ſums, under the name of a free gift; and alſo the late peeling and impoveriſhing the Pope's temporal dominions in

Italy, by the armies of the Auſtrians, Neapolitans and Spaniards, paſſing and repaſſing through them, and living ſo much at diſcretion in them, of which the Pope has ſo loudly complained, and in vain; receiving nothing but menaces, when he has objected againſt giving liberty for the like paſſage for the future. Theſe things make it hopeful that the time is coming when the princes of Europe, *the ten horns, ſhall hate the whore, and make her deſolate and naked, and eat her fleſh*, as Rev. xvii. 16. which will prepare the way for what next follows, *her being burnt with fire;* even as the ſixth Vial poured out, to conſume the ſupplies of Antichriſt, and ſtrip him naked of his wealth, and, as it were, to pick his fleſh off from his bones, will make way for what next follows, the ſeventh Vial, that will conſume Antichriſt, by the fierceneſs of God's wrath.

Theſe things duly conſidered, I imagine, afford us ground to ſuppoſe, not only that the effect of this ſixth Vial is already begun, but that ſome progreſs is already made in it, and that this Vial is now running apace. And when it ſhall be finiſhed, there is all reaſon to ſuppoſe that the deſtruction of Antichriſt will very ſpeedily follow, and that the

two laſt Vials will ſucceed one another more cloſely than the other Vials. When once the river Euphrates was dried up, and Cyrus's way was prepared, he delayed not, but immediately entered into the city to deſtroy it. Nor is it God's manner, when once his way is prepared, to delay to deliver his church, and ſhew mercy to Zion. When once impediments are removed, Chriſt will no longer remain at a diſtance, but will be like a roe or a young hart, coming ſwiftly to the help of his people. When that cry is made, *Caſt ye up, caſt ye up, prepare the way*, &c. *The high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, is repreſented as very near to revive the ſpirit of the contrite, and deliver his people with whom he had been wroth.* When that cry is made, Iſai. xl. *Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make ſtraight in the deſart an high-way for our God; every valley ſhall be exalted*, &c. God tells his church, *that her warfare is accompliſhed, and the time to comfort her is come, and that the glory of the Lord now ſhall be revealed, and all fleſh ſee it together.* And agreeably to theſe things, Chriſt, on the pouring ou tthe ſixth Vial, ſays, *Behold I come.* The ſixth Vial is the forerunner of the ſeventh or laſt, to prepare

its way. The angel that pours out this Vial is the harbinger of Chriſt, and when the harbinger is come, the king is at hand. John the Baptiſt, that was Chriſt's harbinger, who came to level mountains and fill up vallies, proclaimed, *The kingdom of heaven is at hand;* and when he had prepared Chriſt's way, then *the Lord ſuddenly came into his temple, even the meſſenger of the covenant.* Mal. iii. 1.

It is true, that we do not know how long this Vial may continue running, and ſo Chriſt's way preparing, before it is fully prepared; but yet if there be reaſon to think the effect of this Vial is begun, or is near, then there is reaſon alſo to think that the beginning of that great work of God's Spirit, in reviving of religion, which, before it is finiſhed, will iſſue in Antichriſt's ruin, is not far off. For it is pretty manifeſt, that the beginning of this work will accompany the ſixth Vial; for the gathering together of the armies on both ſides, on the ſide of Chriſt and Antichriſt, to that great battle that ſhall iſſue in the overthrow of the latter, will be under this Vial; (compare Rev. xvi. 12, 13, 14. with chap. xix. 11. to the end.) And it is plain, that Chriſt's manifeſting himſelf, and wonderfully appearing after long hiding him-

ſelf, to plead his own and his people's cauſe, and riding forth againſt his enemies in a glorious manner, and his people's following him in pure linen, or the practice of righteouſneſs and pure religion, will be the thing that will give the alarm to Antichriſt, and cauſe him to gather that vaſt hoſt to make the utmoſt oppoſition. But this alarm and gathering together is repreſented as being under the ſixth Vial; ſo that it will be a great revival, and mighty progreſs of true religion under the ſixth Vial, eminently threatening the ſpeedy and utter overthrow of Satan's kingdom on earth, that will ſo mightily rouſe the old ſerpent, to exert himſelf with ſuch exceeding violence, in that greateſt conflict and ſtruggle that ever he had with Chriſt and the church, ſince the world ſtood.*

All the ſeven Vials bring terrible judgments upon Antichriſt; but there ſeems to be ſomething diſtinguiſhing of the three laſt, the fifth, ſixth and ſeventh, viz. That they

NOTE.

* If there be any miſtake here, it is an anticipation of the deſtruction of Antichriſt, through the prevalence of vital religion, inſtead of the preſent rod of the divine indignation; but, it may be, there is a warfare between truth and error yet to come, towards which our author's views might be directed, and for which it becomes us all to be prepared. EDITOR.

more directly tend to the overthrow of his kingdom, and accordingly each of them is attended with a great reviving of religion. The fifth Vial was attended with such a revival and reformation, that greatly weakened and diminished the throne or kingdom of the beast, and went far towards its ruin. It seems as though the sixth Vial should be much more so, for it is the distinguishing note of this Vial, that it is the preparatory Vial, which more than any other Vial prepares the way for Christ's coming to destroy the kingdom of Antichrist, and to set up his own kingdom in the world. A great outpouring of the Spirit accompanied that dispensation which was preparatory to Christ's coming in his public ministry, in the days of his flesh; so, much more, will a great outpouring of the Spirit accompany the dispensation that will be preparatory to Christ's coming in his kingdom.

And besides those things which belong to the preparation of Christ's way, which are so often represented by levelling mountains, drying up rivers, &c. viz. The unravelling intricacies, and removing difficulties attending Christian doctrines, the distinguishing between true religion and its false appear-

ances, the detecting and exploding errors and corrupt principles, and the reforming the wicked lives of profeſſors, which have been the chief ſtumbling-blocks and obſtacles that have hitherto hindered the progreſs of true religion; I ſay, theſe things, which ſeem to belong to this preparatory Vial, are the proper work of the Spirit of God, promoting and advancing divine light and true piety, and can be the effect of nothing elſe.

Agreeably to what has been ſuppoſed, that an extraordinary out-pouring of the Spirit of God is to accompany this ſixth Vial; ſo the beginning of a work of extraordinary awakening has already attended the probable beginning of this Vial; and has been continued in one place or other, for many years paſt; although it has been, in ſome places, mingled with much enthuſiaſm, after the manner of things in their firſt beginnings, unripe, and mixed with much crudity. But it is to be hoped, a far more pure, extenſive and glorious revival of religion is not far off, which will more properly be the beginning of that work, which, in its iſſue, ſhall overthrow the kingdom of Antichriſt, and of Satan through the world. But God *will be enquired of for this, by the houſe of Iſrael to do it for them.*

Anſ. 5. If, notwithſtanding all that I have ſaid, it be ſtill judged that there is ſufficient reaſon to determine that the ruin of Antichriſt is at a very great diſtance, and if all that I have ſaid, as arguing that there is reaſon to hope the beginning of that glorious revival of religion, which, in its continuance and progreſs, will deſtroy the kingdom of Antichriſt, is not very far off, be judged to be of no force; yet it will not follow, that our complying with what is propoſed to us in the late memorial from Scotland, will be in vain, or not followed with ſuch ſpiritual bleſſings, as will richly recompence the pains of ſuch extraordinary prayer for the Holy Spirit, and the revival of religion. If God does not grant that greateſt of all effuſions of his Spirit, ſo ſoon as we deſire, yet we ſhall have the ſatisfaction of a conſciouſneſs of our having employed ourſelves in a manner that is certainly agreeable to Chriſt's will and frequent commands, in being much in prayer for this mercy, and much more in it than has heretofore been common with Chriſtians; and there will be all reaſon to hope, that we ſhall receive ſome bleſſed token of his acceptance. If the fall of myſtical Babylon, and the work of God's Spirit

that ſhall bring it to paſs, be at ſeveral hundred years diſtance, yet it follows not that there will be no happy revivals of religion before that time, which ſhall be richly worth the moſt diligent, earneſt and conſtant praying for.

I would ſay ſomething to one objection more, and then haſten to a concluſion of this diſcourſe.

Object. 6. Some may be ready to object, that what is propoſed in this memorial is a new thing, ſuch as never was put in practice in the church of God before.

Anſ. 1. If there be ſomething circumſtantially new in it, this cannot be a ſufficient objection. The duty of prayer is no new duty; for many of God's people expreſsly to agree, as touching ſomething they ſhall aſk in prayer, is no new thing; for God's people to agree on circumſtances of time and place for united prayer, according to their own diſcretion, is no new thing; for many, in different places, to agree to offer up extraordinary prayers to God, at the ſame time, as a token of their union, is no new thing, but has been commonly practiſed in the appointment of days of faſting and prayer for

ſpecial mercies. And if the people of God ſhould engage in the duty of prayer, for the coming of Chriſt's kingdom, in a new manner, in that reſpect, that they reſolve they will not be ſo negligent of this duty, as has been common with profeſſors of religion heretofore, but will be more frequent and fervent in it; this would be ſuch a new thing as ought to be, and would be only to reform a former negligence. And for the people of God, in various parts of the world, viſibly, and by expreſs agreement, to unite for this extraordinary prayer, is no more than their duty, and no more than what it is foretold the people of God ſhould actually do, before the time comes of the church's promiſed glory on earth. And if this be a duty, then it is a duty to come into ſome method to render this practicable; but it is not practicable (as was ſhewn before) but by this method, or ſome other equivalent.

Anſ. 2. As to this particular method, propoſed to promote union in extraordinary prayer, viz. God's people, in various parts, ſetting apart fixed ſeaſons, to return at certain periods, wherein they agree to offer up their prayers at the ſame time, it is not ſo new as ſome may poſſibly imagine. This

may appear by what follows, which is part of a paper, diſperſed abroad in Great Britain and Ireland, from London, in the year 1712, being the latter end of queen Anne's reign, and very extenſively complied with, entitled, " A ſerious Call from the City to " the Country, to join with them in ſetting " apart ſome time, viz. from ſeven to eight, " every Tueſday morning, for ſolemn ſeek- " ing of God, each one in his cloſet, now in " this ſo critical a juncture."

Jonah i. 6. *Call upon God, if ſo be that God will think upon us, that we periſh not.*— What follows is an extract from it.

" You have formerly been called upon to " the like duty, and have complied with it, " and that not without ſucceſs. It is now " thought highly ſeaſonable to renew the " call. It is hoped that you will not be more " backward, when it is ſo apparent that there " is even greater need. It is ſcarce imagin- " able how a profeſſing people ſhould ſtand " in greater need of prayer, than we do at " this day. You were formerly beſpoke from " that very pertinent text, Zech. viii. 21. " *The inhabitants of one city ſhall go to ano-* " *ther, ſaying, Let us go ſpeedily to pray be-* " *fore the Lord*, or, (as the marginal reading,

" more expreſſive of the original reading,
" is,) *continually, from day to day, to entreat*
" *the face of the Lord.* According to this ex-
" cellent pattern, we of this city, the metro-
" polis of our land, think ourſelves obliged
" to call upon our brethren in Great Britain
" and Ireland, at a time when our hearts can-
" not but meditate terror, and our fleſh trem-
" ble for fear of God, and are afraid of his
" righteous judgments; thoſe paſt being for
" the moſt part forgotten, and the ſigns of
" the times foreboding evil to come, being
" by the generality little, if at all, regarded;
" we cannot therefore but renew our earneſt
" requeſt, that all who make conſcience of
" praying for the peace of Jeruſalem, who
" wiſh well to Zion, who would have us and
" our poſterity a nation of Britiſh Proteſ-
" tants, and not of Popiſh bigots and French
" ſlaves, would give us (as far as real and
" not pretended neceſſity will give leave) a
" meeting at the throne of grace, at the hour
" mentioned, there to wreſtle with God for
" the turning away his anger from us, for
" our deliverance from the hands of his and
" our enemies, for the turning the councils
" of all Ahitophels, at home and abroad, in-
" to fooliſhneſs, for mercy to the queen and

" kingdom, for a happy peace or ſucceſsful
" war, ſo long as the matter ſhall continue
" undetermined; for ſecuring the Proteſtant
" ſucceſſion in the illuſtrious houſe of Ha-
" nover, (by good and evil wiſhes to which,
" the friends and enemies of our religion and
" civil rights, are ſo eſſentially diſtinguiſh-
" ed,) and eſpecially for the influences of di-
" vine grace upon the riſing generation, par-
" ticularly the ſeed of the righteous, that the
" offspring of our Chriſtian heroes may ne-
" ver be the plague of our church and coun-
" try. And we deſire that this ſolemn pray-
" er be begun the firſt Tueſday after ſight,
" and continued at leaſt the ſummer of this
" preſent year 1712. And we think, every
" modeſt, reaſonable and juſt requeſt, ſuch
" as this, ſhould not on any account be de-
" nied us, ſince we are not laying a burden
" on others, to which we will not moſt wil-
" lingly put our own ſhoulders; nay, indeed,
" count it much more a bleſſing than a bur-
" den. We hope this will not be eſteemed,
" by ſerious Proteſtants, of any denomina-
" tion, a needleſs ſtep; much leſs do we fear
" being cenſured by any ſuch, as fanciful
" and melancholy, on account of ſuch a pro-
" poſal. We, with them, believe a provi-

" dence, know and acknowledge that our " God is a God hearing prayer. Scripture " recordeth, and our age is not barren of in- " ſtances of God's working marvellous deli- " verances for his people in anſwer to hum- " ble, believing and importunate prayer, eſ- " pecially when prayer and reformation go " together, which is what we deſire. Let " this counſel be acceptable to us, in this " day of the church's calamity, and our com- " mon fears. Let us ſeek the Lord while he " may be found, and call upon him while he " is near. Let us humble ourſelves under " the mighty hand of God. Let us go and " pray unto our God, and he will hearken " unto us. We ſhall ſeek him and find him, " when we ſearch for him with all our hearts. " Pray for the peace of Jeruſalem; they ſhall " proſper that love her. And may Zion's " friends and enemies both cry out with won- " der, when they ſee the work of God—Be- " hold they pray!—What hath God wrought! " Verily there is a God that judgeth in the " earth.

" *Poſtſcript.* It is deſired and hoped, that " if any are hindered from attending this " work at the above-mentioned hour, they " will nevertheleſs ſet apart an hour week- " ly for it.".

God ſpeedily and wonderfully heard and anſwered thoſe who were united in that extraordinary prayer, propoſed in the above-mentioned paper, in ſuddenly ſcattering thoſe black clouds which threatened the nation and the Proteſtant intereſt with ruin, at that time; in bringing about, in ſo remarkable a manner, that happy change in the ſtate of affairs in the nation, which was after the queen's death, by the bringing in king George the Firſt. juſt at the time when the enemies of the religion and liberties of the nation had ripened their deſigns to be put in ſpeedy execution. And we ſee in the beginning of this extract, this which is propoſed, is mentioned as being no new thing, but that God's people in Great Britain had formerly been called upon to the like duty, and had complied, and that not without ſucceſs. Such like concerts or agreements have ſeveral times been propoſed in Scotland, before this which is now propoſed to us, particularly there was a propoſal publiſhed for this very practice, in the year 1732, and another in 1735; ſo that it appears that this objection of novelty is built on a miſtake.

THE CONCLUSION.

And now, upon the whole, I deſire every

ſerious Chriſtian, that may read this diſcourſe, calmly and deliberately to conſider whether he can excuſe himſelf from complying with what has been propoſed to us and requeſted of us, by thoſe miniſters of Chriſt in Scotland, who are the authors of the late memorial. God has ſtirred up a part of his church, in a diſtant part of the world, to be in an extraordinary manner ſeeking and crying to him, that he would appear to favour Zion, as he has promiſed. And they are applying themſelves to us, to join with them, and make that very propoſal to us which is ſpoken of in my text, and in like manner and circumſtances. The members of one church, in one country, are coming to others, in other diſtant countries, ſaying, *Let us go ſpeedily and conſtantly to pray before the Lord, and to ſeek the Lord of Hoſts.* Will it not become us readily to ſay, *I will go alſo?* What theſe ſervants of Chriſt aſk of us, is not ſilver or gold, or any of our outward ſubſtance, or that we would put ourſelves to any coſt, or do any thing that will be likely to expoſe us to any remarkable trouble, difficulty or ſuffering in our outward intereſt, but only that we would, help together with them, by our prayers to God, for the greateſt mercy

in the world, and that a mercy which as much concerns us as them, for the glory of their Lord and ours, for the great advancement of our common intereſt and happineſs, and the happineſs of our fellow-creatures through all nations; a mercy, which, at this day eſpecially, there is great need of; a mercy, which we, in this land, do ſtand in particular need of; a mercy, which the word of God requires us to make the ſubject-matter of our prayers, above all other mercies, and gives us more encouragement to pray earneſtly and unitedly to him for, than any other mercy; and a mercy, which the providence of God towards the world of mankind, at this day, does loudly call the people of God to pray for. I think we cannot reaſonably doubt but that theſe miniſters have acted a part becoming diſciples of the great Meſſiah, and miniſters of his kingdom, and have done the will of God, and according to his word, in ſetting forward ſuch an affair at this day, and in propoſing it to us; and therefore I deſire it may be conſidered, whether we ſhall not really ſin againſt God, in refuſing to comply with their propoſal and requeſt, or in neglecting it, and turning it by, with but lit-

tle notice and attention, therein diſregarding that which is truly a call of God to us.

The miniſters that make this propoſal to us, are no ſeparatiſts or ſchiſmatics, promoters of no public diſorders, nor of any wildneſs or extravagance in matters of religion, but are quiet and peaceable members and miniſters of the church of Scotland, that have lamented the late diviſions and breaches of that church. If any ſhall ſay, that they are under no advantage to judge of their character, but muſt take it on truſt from others, becauſe they conceal their names; in anſwer to this, I would ſay, That I preſume no ſober perſon will ſay that he has any reaſon to ſuſpect them, to be any other than gentlemen of honeſt intention. Beſure there is no appearance of any thing elſe, but an upright deſign in their propoſal, and that they have not mentioned their names, is an argument of it. It may well be preſumed, from the manner of their expreſſing themſelves, in the memorial itſelf, they concealed their names from that, which, perhaps, may be called an exceſs of modeſty, chuſing to be at the greateſt diſtance from appearing to ſet forth themſelves to the view of the world, as the heads of a great affair, and the

firſt projectors and movers of ſomething extraordinary, that they deſire ſhould become general, and that God's people, in various diſtant parts of the world, ſhould agree in. And therefore, they are moreover careful to tell us, that they do not propoſe the affair, as now ſetting it on foot, but as a thing already ſet on foot, and do not tell us who firſt projected and moved it. The propoſal is made to us in a very proper and prudent manner, with all appearance of Chriſtian modeſty and ſincerity, and with a very prudent guard againſt any thing that looks like ſuperſtition, or whatſoever might entangle a tender conſcience, and far from any appearance of a deſign to promote any particular party or denomination of Chriſtians, in oppoſition to others, but with all appearance to the contrary, in their charitable requeſt, that none would, by any means, conceive of any ſuch thing to be in their view, and that all, of every denomination and opinion concerning the late religious commotions, would join with them, in ſeeking the common intereſt of the kingdom of Chriſt; and, therefore, I think, none can be in the way of their duty, in neglecting a propoſal in itſelf excellent, and that which they have reaſon to

think is made with upright intentions, merely becauſe the propoſers modeſtly conceal their names. I do not ſee how any ſerious perſon, that has an ill opinion of late religious ſtirs, can have any colour of reaſon to refuſe a compliance with this propoſal, on that account; the more diſorders, extravagancies and deluſions of the devil have lately prevailed, the more need have we to pray earneſtly to God, for his Holy Spirit, to promote true religion, in oppoſition to the grand deceiver, and all his works; and the more ſuch prayer, as is propoſed, is anſwered, the more effectually will all that is contrary to ſober and pure religion be extirpated and exploded.

One would think that every one who favours the duſt of Zion, when he hears that God is ſtirring up a conſiderable number of his miniſters and people, to unite in extraordinary prayer, for the revival of religion and advancement of his kingdom, ſhould greatly rejoice on this occaſion. If we lay to heart the preſent calamities of the church of Chriſt, and long for that bleſſed alteration which God has promiſed, one would think it ſhould be natural to rejoice at the appearance of ſomething in ſo dark a day,

which is ſo promiſing a token. Would not our friends that were lately in captivity in Canada, who earneſtly longed for deliverance, have rejoiced to have heard of any thing that ſeemed to forebode the approach of their redemption? And particularly may we not ſuppoſe ſuch of them as were religious perſons, would greatly have rejoiced to have underſtood that there was ſtirred up in God's people an extraordinary ſpirit of prayer for their redemption? And I do not know why it would not be as natural for us to rejoice at the like hopeful token of the redemption of Zion, if we made her intereſt our own, and preferred Jeruſalem above our chief joy.

If we are indeed called of God to comply with the propoſal now made to us, then let me beſeech all that do ſincerely love the intereſt of real Chriſtianity, notwithſtanding any diverſity of opinion, and former diſputes, now to unite in this affair, with one heart and voice—and *let us go ſpeedily to pray before the Lord.* There is no need that one ſhould wait for another. If we can get others, that are our neighbours, to join with us, and ſo can conveniently ſpend the quarterly ſeaſons with praying ſocieties, this is deſirable; but if not, why ſhould we wholly

neglect the duty propoſed? Why ſhould not we perform it by ourſelves, uniting in heart and practice, as far as we are able, with thoſe who, in diſtant places, are engaged in that duty at that time?

If it be agreeable to the mind and will of God, that we ſhould comply with the memorial, by praying for the coming of Chriſt's kingdom, in the manner therein propoſed, then doubtleſs it is the duty of all to comply with the memorial, in that reſpect alſo, viz. in endeavouring, as far as in us lies, to promote others joining in ſuch prayer, and to render this union and agreement as extenſive as may be. Private Chriſtians may have many advantages and opportunities for this; but eſpecially miniſters, inaſmuch as they not only are by office overſeers of whole congregations of God's people, and their guides in matters of religion, but ordinarily have a far more extenſive acquaintance and influence abroad, than private Chriſtians in common have.

And I hope that ſuch as are convinced it is their duty to comply with and encourage this deſign, will remember we ought not only to go ſpeedily to pray before the Lord, and to ſeek his mercy, but alſo to go con-

ſtantly. We ſhould unite in our practice theſe two things, which our Saviour unites in his precept, praying and not fainting. If we ſhould continue ſome years, and nothing remarkable in Providence ſhould appear, as though God heard and anſwered, we ſhould act very unbecoming believers, if we ſhould therefore begin to be diſheartened, and grow dull and ſlack, in our ſeeking of God ſo great a mercy. It is very apparent from the word of God, that God is wont often to try the faith and patience of his people, when crying to him for ſome great and important mercy, by with-holding the mercy ſought, for a ſeaſon, and not only ſo, but at firſt to cauſe an increaſe of dark appearances, and yet, without fail, at laſt, to ſucceed thoſe who continue inſtant in prayer with all perſeverance, and will not let God go except he bleſſes. It is now propoſed that this extraordinary united prayer ſhould continue for ſeven years, from November, 1746. Perhaps ſome that appear forward to engage, may begin to think the time long, before the ſeven years are out, and may account it a dull ſtory, to go on, for ſo long a time, praying in this extraordinary method, while all yet continues dark and dead, without any dawn-

ings of the wiſhed-for light, or new promiſing appearance in Providence of the near approach of the deſired mercy. But let it be conſidered, whether it will not be a poor buſineſs, if our faith and patience is ſo ſhort-winded, that we cannot be willing to wait upon God one ſeven years, in a way of taking this little pains, in ſeeking a mercy ſo infinitely vaſt. For my part, I ſincerely wiſh and hope, that there may not be an end of extraordinary united prayer, among God's people, for the effuſions of the bleſſed Spirit, when the ſeven years are ended, but that it will be continued, either in this method, or ſome other, by a new agreement, that will be entered into, with greater engagedneſs, and more abundant alacrity, than this is; and that extraordinary united prayer for ſuch a mercy will be further propagated and extended, than it can be expected to be in one ſeven years. But yet, at the ſame time, I hope, God's people, that unite in this agreement, will ſee ſome tokens for good, before theſe ſeven years are out, that ſhall give them to ſee, that God has not ſaid to the ſeed of Jacob—Seek ye me in vain; and ſhall ſerve greatly to animate and encourage them to go on in united prayers for the

advancement of Chriſt's kingdom, with encreaſing fervency. But whatever our hopes may be in this reſpect, we muſt be content to be ignorant of the times and ſeaſons, which the Father hath put in his own power; and muſt be willing that God ſhould anſwer prayer, and fulfil his own glorious promiſes, in his own time; remembering ſuch inſtructions, counſels and promiſes of the word of God as theſe—*Wait on the Lord, be of Good courage, and he ſhall ſtrengthen thine heart; wait, I ſay, on the Lord. For the viſion is yet for an appointed time; but in the end it will ſpeak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it, becauſe it will ſurely come, it will not tarry. I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my ſalvation; my God will hear me. God will wipe away tears from off all faces, and the rebuke of his people ſhall he take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath ſpoken it. And it ſhall be ſaid in that day, Lo, this is our God! we have waited for him, and he will ſave us: This is* JEHOVAH! *we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his ſalvation.* Amen.

THE

DOWNFALL

OF

MYSTICAL BABYLON;

OR, A

KEY TO THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD,

IN THE

POLITICAL OPERATIONS OF 1793-4.

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF A DISCOURSE, PREACHED, FIRST, AT ELIZABETH TOWN, AND AFTERWARDS AT NEW-YORK, ON THE EVENING OF THE LORD'S DAY, APRIL 7, 1793, AND NOW OFFERED, WITH NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS, IN EVIDENCE OF THE SENTIMENTS THEN DELIVERED.

BY *DAVID AUSTIN*, A.M.
Minister of the First Presbyterian Church at Elizabeth Town.

APOLOGY.

AS the following discourse was delivered from short notes, it is hoped that any little difference in arrangement, or any additional proofs or illustrations, now observed, will be readily excused by any who heard the discourse preached; especially, whilst it is remembered, that in a printed discourse much higher authorities are expected, than what is necessary in the common course of parochial preaching.

For any sentiments observed to be omitted, the reader is referred to the tenor of the preceding discourses; and if any should be ready to say, that proofs and illustrations are needlessly multiplied, it may not be improper to answer, that on the subject of prophecy, as well as in respect to every other, the truth gains in proportion to the evidence by which it is attested; and shines much brighter whilst supported by a cloud of approved witnesses, than whilst resting on the opinion of any single interpreter.

THE

DOWNFALL

OF

MYSTICAL BABYLON.

REVELATION xviii. 20.

Rejoice over her thou heaven, and ye holy apoſtles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her.

IN all the calamities which it pleaſes God to bring upon his enemies, or upon the enemies of his church, all holy beings have cauſe to rejoice. The ground of their joy, in ſuch events, however awful to the ſufferers, is founded in the reaſon and nature of things as well as in the expreſs appointment and call of God.

The cauſe of God in heaven, and the cauſe of Chriſt and of his church on the earth are one and the ſame; and ſo far as either the former or the latter, or both unitedly, may be employed, in their uſual methods of exertion, in counteracting, and in overturning

the purpoſes of the Grand Adverſary or of his inſtruments; in the ſame degree may the ſtruggle be ſtiled a common cauſe, or a general war. The enemies of God are the enemies of his church, and they who ſeek the overthrow of the latter, would, if poſſible, dethrone the former. On this account, therefore, it is, that all holy beings, whether in the heaven of heavens, on high, or whether in the heavens of the Chriſtian church, (for ſo, in prophetic ſtile, the word ſometimes ſignifies,) are called upon to rejoice at the calamities which God, in judgment for their ſins, brings on his enemies, and on the enemies of his Zion.

All holy beings have cauſe to rejoice in the downfall of the wicked, as ſuch a diſaſter, under the management of heaven, may tend to the upbuilding of the kingdom of Chriſt, and of the truth in the world. By ſuch events victory is, renewedly, aſcribed to God. The faith and hope of the pious are revived and confirmed.—That ſuch effects, by ſuch diſaſters upon the wicked, have been produced, the ſcriptures plainly teach. The drowning of the old world, and the deſtruction of Pharaoh and his hoſt are inſtances in point. In view of the latter, *ſang Moſes*

and the children of Iſrael this ſong unto the Lord, and ſpake, ſaying—I will ſing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed glorioufly: the horſe and his rider hath he thrown into the ſea. The Lord is my ſtrength and ſong, and he is become my ſalvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him. The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his name.

Not only is the confidence of the righteous maintained by ſuch diſplays of vindictive power, but the ſame events load, with increaſing danger, the intereſts of Satan and of the wicked in general.

To revive the intereſts of truth and of grace—to ſupport the cauſe of God in the boſoms of the righteous, and to accumulate the degrees of danger, apprehenſion and final deſtruction, on the part of the wicked, have no doubt been important, if not leading objects to be accompliſhed, in all the denunciations and executions which, in all ages, have been, in a higher or leſs degree, emptied forth upon the wicked, from the vials of the divine indignation.

In purſuance of the ſame important objects, a call is iſſued, on a mighty and ſolemn

occaſion, to all friends to God, and to his government to rejoice. *Rejoice over her thou heaven, and ye holy apoſtles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her.*

Unfolding this paſſage I propoſe to ſhew,

I. Who it is over whoſe deſtruction holy beings are called upon to rejoice.

II. The cauſe of this diſaſter.

III. Notice the means employed to bring this event to paſs. And,

IV. Shew the foundation the event lays for univerſal joy; concluding with ſome reflections from the whole.

And will a very gracious God ſo enlighten the mind, both of the ſpeaker and of the hearers, that truths may be opened, impreſſions made, and effects wrought anſwerable to the nature and import of ſo ſolemn and momentous a ſubject.—I am,

I. To ſhew who it is over whoſe deſtruction, or downfall, all holy beings are called upon to rejoice.

For this knowledge we muſt repair to the firſt and ſecond verſes of the context. *And after theſe things,* ſaith the inſpired apoſtle, *I ſaw another angel come down from heaven,*

having great power, and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a ſtrong voice, ſaying, BABYLON THE GREAT IS FALLEN, IS FALLEN.

It is very generally, if not unanimouſly, agreed by Proteſtant writers, that by Babylon, as uſed in this place, you are to underſtand the extenſive, once triumphant, and perſecuting power of anti-chriſtian Papal Rome, ſtiled BABYLON, becauſe there are ſo many appendages to this idolatrous power, which ſo nearly reſemble, and ſo exactly anſwer the prophetic deſcription of Babylon, of the Chaldees—the inveterate, the powerful, and, for a ſeaſon, the ſucceſsful enemy of the people of God, in ancient time.

Figures of ſpeech, eſpecially in the prophetic parts, are very frequent in the ſcriptures. Indeed, almoſt the whole of this book of *the Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt which God gave unto him, to ſhew unto his ſervants things which muſt ſhortly come to paſs,* is made up of figures. Sometimes, leſt the figure ſhould be unintelligible, the angel ſent to communicate the very intereſting intelligence of this invaluable book, explains the figure.—And ſometimes the prophetic herald gives a different view of the ſame object in differ-

ent figures. Of this method we have an example in the ſubject before us.

Papal Rome, here ſtiled BABYLON THE GREAT, in the chapter preceding is called, becauſe of her idolatrous practices, and becauſe of her forſaking her original faithful Lord and Huſband—the GREAT WHORE: And that it might be known to be the ſame power, as is here deſcribed, the word Babylon is annexed or interwoven with the other characters of this myſtical harlot. This fact will be yet more clear if you liſten to the teſtimony itſelf. *So he carried me away in the ſpirit into the wilderneſs: and I ſaw a woman ſit upon a ſcarlet-coloured beaſt, full of names of blaſphemy, having ſeven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and ſcarlet-colour, and decked with gold, and precious ſtones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthineſs of her fornication. And upon her forehead was a name written,* MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

In ſupporting the alluſion, or in running the parallel between ancient heatheniſh and modern anti-chriſtian Papal Babylon, you

will permit, that I but touch upon the different branches of ſimilarity, leaving the more full illuſtration to be ſupplied by your own recollection and ſtudy.

As in the prophetic writings the words Jeruſalem, Zion, the Temple of the living God, &c. are uſed to expreſs the ſtate of the church under the Jewiſh, ſo the ſame words are ſometimes applied to expreſs the ſtate and character of the church under the Chriſtian diſpenſation. On the other hand, as Sodom, Egypt and Babylon were names given to the enemies of God, and of his church, in ancient time, ſo, under the ſame names, their ſucceſſors are ſet forth and deſcribed as to exiſt in later times.

All theſe dark ſhades of national character, and many more, did time allow, might be proved to be, with juſtice, applicable to this anti-chriſtian power of Papal Rome.—To Sodom this power may be likened for her ſin, and to Egypt for her darkneſs, idolatry and oppreſſion. And, without doubt, by the angel of God, in his addreſs to St. John on the ſubject of the ſlaughter of the witneſſes, theſe dark ſhades are applied to this tyrannical dominion. *And their dead bodies ſhall lie in the ſtreet of the great city,*

which ſpiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where, alſo, our Lord was crucified. On theſe words, ſaith an approved commentator*— "The place where this was done is ſtiled "Sodom and Egypt, and the *great city* "*where our Lord was crucified;* which, if "literally underſtood, ſignifies Jeruſalem, "but if myſtically underſtood, ROME, or the "Roman empire."—And no one, I may add, will ſuppoſe it is perverting the prophetic emblem, if it be applied, ſolely, to Rome; eſpecially, if it be recollected, that as Jeruſalem was the head of the Jewiſh, ſo Rome profeſſes to be the head of the Chriſtian empire; and alſo, that the once crucifying of our Lord at Jeruſalem, is but a faint emblem of the thouſand crucifixions he has ſince undergone in the multiplied perſecutions and tortures of the members of his myſtical body; and, I may add, which he ſtill undergoes in the daily offerings, the myſtical ſervices, the ſuperſtitious maſſes of the church of Rome.

Hear, alſo, to this point, the teſtimony of a late very reſpectable writer on the ſubject of prophecy.† "As to the great city, men-

NOTES.

* Burkit in loco. † Langdon in loco.

" tioned under the figurative names of So-
" dom and Egypt, and compared alſo to Je-
" ſalem, where our Lord was crucified, we
" ſhall find by following viſions that Rome,
" with its empire, is meant. It is called So-
" dom, on account of the abominable crimes
" committed in it; Egypt, on account of
" abounding ſuperſtition and idolatry, and
" the cruel bondage in which it holds the
" people of God: And it is compared to
" Jeruſalem, being ſaid to be the city where
" our Lord was crucified; becauſe while it
" pretended to be an holy city, it had killed
" the prophets and ſaints, and crucified Chriſt
" afreſh in his members. Here it may be
" more eſpecially obſerved, that as in the
" beginning of the chapter the temple is the
" emblem of the Chriſtian church, that city,
" with its empire, in which the church is com-
" prehended, may very properly be compar-
" ed to Jeruſalem, the city in which the Jew-
" iſh temple ſtood: And as our Lord was
" crucified within the juriſdiction of the Ro-
" man empire, and by the Roman authori-
" ty, and the Papal empire has ſucceeded to
" the other, and claims an equal extent, there
" is a propriety in ſaying that our Lord was
" crucified in the great city Rome, conſi-

"dered in connexion with the empire of "which it is the capital."

Having laid this foundation as to the uſe and application of prophetic figures, to which much might be added, were it neceſſary, the way is plain to proceed with my ſubject, in an attempt to ſhew, that by BABYLON THE GREAT, whoſe fall is predicted in the text, is meant the preſent anti-chriſtian power of Papal Rome.

This fact will, at once, appear moſt palpably evident, if, with attention, you are pleaſed to follow me in a conſideration of the ſeveral articles of analogy, between ancient and modern Babylon, deſigned to juſtify the prophetic alluſion.

1. Did Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, *ſet up an image*, and call upon the ſubjects of his empire to fall down and worſhip it, ſo hath the Nebuchadnezzar of the church of Rome, ſupported by the magi of his kingdom, ſet up, and continued to ſet up images innumerable, to which the homage of bowing and kneeling is continually paid in churches, in many public places, and even on the common country roads, by the ſubjects of this myſtical empire, as is well known to thoſe who have paſſed through this idolatrous country.

2. Did the decree of the king of Babylon enjoin homage to this image on pain of being caſt *into the midſt of a burning fiery furnace;* ſo doth the church of Rome enjoin homage to her idols on pain of excluſion from her communion, with the tortures of the inquiſition in this world, and the pains of purgatory and damnation in the next.*

3. Did Nebuchadnezzar actually inflict, or attempt to inflict, the pains of the fiery furnace on ſome who refuſed to bow down to his image; ſo hath the church of Rome actually inflicted, on thouſands of innocent Proteſtants, refuſing to partake in her idolatries, all the tortures which imagination could invent.

Let the hiſtory of her perſecutions, maſſacres, ſlaughters and burnings teſtify to this fact.†

NOTES.

* The Author once had his own hat knocked off by the bayonet of a ſoldier, belonging to a party who eſcorted and protected a Biſhop and his confederates, during a very thronged proceſſion, at Nantes, becauſe he would not do cuſtomary homage at the preſence of the Hoſt, which was carried along the ſtreets, claiming religious homage, during the farcical exhibitions on the celebration of the Fête de Dieu.

† "Satan has oppoſed the Reformation with cruel *perſecutions*. The perſecutions with which the Proteſtants, in one kingdom and another, have been tormented, by the church of Rome,

4. Was ancient Babylon the ſeat and ſource of idolatry in the Pagan; ſo is Rome in the Chriſtian world.

NOTE.

have been, in many reſpects, beyond any that were before. So that Antichriſt has proved the greateſt and moſt cruel enemy the church of Chriſt ever had; agreeable to the deſcription given of the church of Rome. *And I ſaw the woman drunken with the blood of the ſaints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jeſus.—And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of ſaints, and of all them that were ſlain upon the earth.*

The heathen perſecutions had been very dreadful; but now perſecution, by the church of Rome, was improved, and ſtudied, and cultivated as an art or ſcience. Such methods of tormenting were found out, that were beyond the invention of former ages. And, that perſecution might be managed more effectually, there were certain ſocieties eſtabliſhed in various parts of the Popiſh dominions, whoſe buſineſs it ſhould be to ſtudy, improve, and practiſe perſecution in its higheſt perfection, which are called the courts of inquiſition.* A peruſal of the hiſtories of the Romiſh perſecution, and their courts of inquiſition, will give that idea, which a few words cannot expreſs.

* Theſe infernal tribunals were firſt erected in the twelfth century by the infamous Father Dominic, under the patronage of Pope Innocent III. in order more completely to extirpate the Waldenſes, and other pretended heretics. It is difficult to conceive, that if God had delivered the world entirely into the Devil's hands, (as Satan once pretended) that his ingenuity and malice could have invented any thing more deteſtable and ſhocking. In fact, there is ſcarcely a method that could delay or pervert juſtice, but they have adopted it in their forms; nor does there ſeem a poſſible method of torture but they have invented and repeatedly exerciſed. The reader, whoſe nerves can bear ſuch reiterated ſcenes of cruelty, may read Baker's Hiſtory of the Inquiſition—the Hiſtory of the Inquiſition at Goa, written by a Papiſt, and ſimilar works. But to ſhew how far it is poſſible for human nature to go, let him read the following extract from a ſermon preached at Evora, on occaſion of one of the moſt horrid ſcenes the ſun ever beheld, an *auto de fe*, when they burn or rather roaſt heretics (as

Did her kings rule over many kingdoms and provinces; ſo this anti-chriſtian idola-

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they call them) alive, from a principle of religion. "Beloved Portugueſe," ſaid the inhuman wretch, "let us return thanks to Heaven, for his great goodneſs in giving us this holy tribunal (the Inquiſition.) Had it not been for this tribunal our kingdom would have become a tree without flowers or fruits, fit only to be committed to the flames. What progreſs has hereſy made, for want of an Inquiſition, in England, France, Germany, and the Netherlands! It is evident, had it not been for ſo great a bleſſing, our country would have been like to thoſe above-mentioned."

When the Reformation began, the beaſt with ſeven heads and ten horns began to rage in a dreadful manner. After the Reformation, the church of Rome renewed its perſecution of the poor Waldenſes, and great multitudes of them were cruelly tortured and put to death. Soon after the Reformation, there were alſo terrible perſecutions in various parts of Germany, and eſpecially in Bohemia, which laſted for thirty years together, in which ſo much blood was ſhed for the ſake of religion, that a certain writer compares it to the plenty of waters of the great rivers of Germany. The countries of Poland, Lithuania, and Hungary were, in like manner, deluged with Proteſtant blood.*

* "If Rome *Pagan* hath ſlain her thouſands of innocent Chriſtians, Rome *Chriſtian* hath ſlain her ten thouſands. For, not to mention other outrageous ſlaughters and barbarities, the croiſades againſt the Waldenſes and Albigenſes, the murders committed by the Duke of Alva in the Netherlands, the maſſacres in France and Ireland, will probably amount to above ten times the number of all the Chriſtians ſlain in all the ten perſecutions of the Roman emperors put together."

"By means of theſe and other cruel perſecutions, the Proteſtant religion was in a great meaſure ſuppreſſed in Bohemia, and the Palatinate, and Hungary, which before were Proteſtant countries. Thus was fulfilled what was foretold of the little horn." *And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell, even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that ſpake great things, whoſe look was more ſtout than his fellows: I beheld and the ſame horn made war with the*

trous harlot is said to *ſit upon many waters; with whom the kings of the earth have commit-*

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ſaints, and prevailed againſt them. And what was foretold of the beaſt having ſeven heads and ten horns. *And it was given unto him to make war with the ſaints, and to overcome them; and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.*

Alſo Holland, and the other low countries, were, for many years, a ſcene of nothing but the moſt affecting and amazing cruelties, being deluged with the blood of Proteſtants, under the mercileſs hands of the Spaniards, to whom they were then in ſubjection.—But in this perſecution the Devil in a great meaſure failed of his purpoſe, as it iſſued in a great part of the Netherlands caſting off the Spaniſh yoke, and ſetting up a wealthy and powerful Proteſtant ſtate, to the great defence of the Proteſtant cauſe ever ſince.

France alſo is another country which, ſince the Reformation, in ſome reſpects, perhaps, more than any other, has been a ſcene of dreadful cruelties ſuffered by the Proteſtants there. After many cruelties had been exerciſed towards the Proteſtants in that kingdom, there was begun a perſecution of them in the year 1571, in the reign of Charles the IX. king of France.

It began with a cruel maſſacre, wherein ſeventy thouſand Proteſtants were ſlain in a few days time, as the king boaſted; and in all this perſecution, he ſlew, as is ſuppoſed, three hundred thouſand martyrs. And it is reckoned, that about this time, within thirty years, there were martyred in this kingdom, for the Proteſtant religion, thirty-nine princes, one hundred and forty-eight counts, two hundred and thirty-four barons, one hundred and forty-ſeven thouſand five hundred and eighteen gentlemen, and ſeven hundred and ſixty thouſand of the common people.

The Pariſian maſſacre was aggravated with ſeveral circumſtances of wantonneſs and treachery; but we hope that the above numbers are exaggerated. Thuanus, their own hiſtorian, reckons thirty thouſand lives deſtroyed in this ſlaughter; but Proteſtant authors ſeem to have reaſon for ſuppoſing them not leſs than one hundred thouſand in the whole. But the moſt horrid circumſtance in the hiſtory is, that when the news of this event reached Rome, Pope Gregory XIII. inſtituted the moſt ſolemn rejoicings, giving

ted fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.

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thanks to Almighty God for this glorious victory!!!—An inſtance that has no parallel, even in hell.

But all theſe perſecutions were, for exquiſite cruelty, far exceeded by thoſe which followed in the reign of Lewis XIV. which, indeed, are ſuppoſed to exceed all others that ever have been; and being long continued by reaſon of the long reign of that king, almoſt wholly extirpated the Proteſtant religion out of that kingdom, where had been before a multitude of famous Proteſtant churches all over the country.* Thus it was given to the beaſt to make war with the ſaints, and to overcome them.

* *The Perſecution under Lewis XIV.*—This followed the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, A. D. 1685. The following extract is taken from a French work of reputation.

"The troopers, ſoldiers and dragoons went into the Proteſtants' houſes, where they marred and defaced their houſehold ſtuff, broke their looking-glaſſes, and other utenſils and ornaments, let their wine run about their cellars, and threw about their corn, and ſpoiled it. And as to thoſe things which they could not deſtroy in this manner, ſuch as furniture of beds, linen, wearing apparel, plate, &c. they carried them to the market place, and ſold them to the Jeſuits and other Roman Catholics. By theſe means the Proteſtants in Montaubon alone were, in four or five days, ſtripped of above a million of money. But this was not the worſt.

"They turned the dining-rooms of gentlemen into ſtables for their horſes, and treated the owners of the houſes where they quartered with the higheſt indignity and cruelty, laſhing them about from one to another, day and night, without intermiſſion, not ſuffering them to eat or drink; and when they began to ſink under the fatigue and pains they had undergone, they laid them on a bed, and when they thought them ſomewhat recovered, made them riſe, and repeated the ſame tortures. When they ſaw the blood and ſweat run down their faces and other parts of their bodies, they ſluiced them with water; and putting over their heads

5. Was ancient Babylon a ſcourge to the people of God, and did ſhe bring them into

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kettle-drums, turned upſide down, they made a continual din upon them till thoſe unhappy creatures loſt their ſenſes. When one party of theſe tormentors were weary they were relieved by another, who practiſed the ſame cruelties with freſh vigor.

At Negrepliſſe, a town near Montaubon, they hung up Iſaac Favin, a Proteſtant citizen of that place, by his arm-pits, and tormented him a whole night by pinching and tearing off his fleſh with pincers. They made a great fire round a boy about twelve years old, who, with hands and eyes lifted up to heaven, cried out—"My God, help me!"—And when they found the youth reſolved to die rather than renounce his religion, they ſnatched him from the fire juſt as he was on the point of being burnt.

"In ſeveral places the ſoldiers applied red hot irons to the hands and feet of men, and the breaſts of women. At Nantes they hung up ſeveral women and maids by their feet, and others by their arm-pits, and thus expoſed them to public view ſtark-naked. They bound mothers that gave ſuck to poſts, and let their ſucking infants lie languiſhing in their ſight for ſeveral days and nights, crying, mourning and gaſping for life. Some they bound before a great fire, and, being half roaſted, let them go—a puniſhment worſe than death. Amidſt a thouſand hideous cries, and a thouſand blaſphemies, they hung up men and women by the hair, and ſome by their feet, on hooks in chimneys, and ſmoaked them with wiſps of wet hay till they were ſuffocated. They tied ſome under the arms with ropes, and plunged them again and again into wells. They bound others like criminals, put them to the torture, and with a funnel filled them with wine, till the fumes of it took away their reaſon, when they made them ſay they conſented to be Catholics. They ſtripped them naked, and, after a thouſand indignities, ſtuck them with pins and needles from head to foot. They cut and laſhed them with knives, and ſometimes with red-hot pincers took hold of them by the noſe and other parts of the body, and dragged them about the rooms till they made them promiſe to be Catholics, or till the cries of theſe miſerable wretches, calling upon God for help, forced them to let them go. They beat them with ſtaves, and thus bruiſed, and with broken bones,

a ſeventy years captivity? ſo this anti-chriſtian power hath been a ſcourge to the true worſhippers of God in modern times, and hath had a great part of the Chriſtian church

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dragged them to church, where their forced preſence was taken for an abjuration. In ſome places they tied fathers and huſbands to their bed-poſts, and, before their eyes, ravaged their wives and daughters with impunity. They blew up men and women with bellows till they burſt them. If any, to eſcape theſe barbarities, endeavoured to ſave themſelves by flight, they purſued them into the fields and woods, where they ſhot them like wild beaſts, and prohibited them from departing the kingdom, (a cruelty never practiſed by Nero or Diocleſian) upon pain of confiſcation of effects, the gallies, the laſh, and perpetual impriſonment; inſomuch that the priſons of the ſea-port towns were crammed with men, women and children, who endeavoured to ſave themſelves by flight from this dreadful perſecution. With theſe ſcenes of deſolation and horror, the popiſh clergy feaſted their eyes, and made only a matter of laughter and ſport of them."

Other cruelties.—Beſide the Proteſtant blood ſhed in theſe perſecutions, Popery has to anſwer for the lives of millions of Jews, Mahometans, and barbarians. When the Moors conquered Spain in the eighth century, they allowed the Chriſtians the free exerciſe of their religion. But in the fifteenth century, when the tables were turned, and Ferdinand ſubdued the Moriſcoes, (the deſcendants of the above Moors) many hundred thouſands of them were forced to be baptized, or burnt, maſſacred, or baniſhed, and their children ſold for ſlaves; beſides an innumerable multitude of Jews, who ſhared the ſame cruelties, chiefly by means of the infernal Inquiſition. A worſe ſlaughter, if poſſible, was made among the natives of Spaniſh America, where fifteen millions are ſaid to have been ſacrificed to the genius of Popery in the courſe of about forty years. Well, therefore, might the inſpired apoſtle ſay, that at myſtic Babylon's deſtruction—*In her was found the blood of prophets, and of ſaints, and of all that were ſlain upon the earth!* Rev. xviii. 24.——[See Edwards's Hiſtory of Redemption, with notes, page 452, 459, of the London, or new American edition.]

in more than Egyptian bondage for twelve hundred years.

During this bondage it is that the TWO WITNESSES—the *few* faithful, who, in every age, have teſtified to the truth; (as ſome have ſuppoſed) but if ſo, there may be alſo an alluſion, and perhaps a primary one, to the TWO OLIVE TREES of the prophet's viſion, *the anointed ones that ſtand by the Lord of the whole earth.*

The olive tree afforded light from its fatneſs, and nouriſhment from its fruit. Underſtanding, therefore, the purport of the TWO WITNESSES, as explained by the angel, to be the two OLIVE TREES, and the TWO CANDLESTICKS, *ſtanding before the God of the earth*, I am rather inclined to think, that they have a more extenſive, myſtical, and important meaning than what they have been generally underſtood to imply. If the olive trees and candleſticks were an emblem of ſpiritual and divine communications during their ſtanding in the Jewiſh, what ſhould hinder the ſame application whilſt they ſtand in the Chriſtian church?

As the gifts and graces ſhed down upon the miniſters of our bleſſed Lord, and upon his churches, after his aſcenſion, were ſup-

poſed to have been typified or prefigured by the anointing and common oil of the ſanctuary; ſo the olive tree as giving light and heat, and, I may add, nouriſhment too, was found in the uſage and appointment of heaven, no unbecoming repreſentation or emblem of thoſe ſpiritual communications which were then ſhed upon the true worſhippers, and which will ever be continued as long as Chriſt is the vine, or true olive, and his people the needy branches.

May we not then ſuppoſe, that by theſe TWO OLIVE TREES and the TWO CANDLESTICKS, *ſtanding before the God of the earth*, is meant the *ſources* of divine and ſpiritual ſupplies to his church, the *medium* of communication, or methods of *outward* and *open exhibition;* or ſhall we ſay, that the emblem may partake a little of each, and ſtand a lively figure of them all?

If you aſk how this interpretation can conſiſt with the epithet, with their being called *witneſſes*, it may be anſwered, they are juſtly and literally ſo to be ſtiled. Are not the word of God preached, and his ordinances adminiſtered, by his faithful miniſters, properly to be ſtiled WITNESSES for God?—

And if you chooſe to retain the number *two*, may we not ſay the *ſpirit* and the *word*, with their uſual and outward methods of adminiſtration, are ſignified; or ſay the word, and the ordinances of God in general, or the whole exhibition of the teſtimony of God, whether in things inward and ſpiritual, or in things outward and viſible?

With this interpretation agrees well the idea of their propheſying *in ſackcloth*; for no one can pretend, but the adminiſtration of the word and worſhip of God, in the Romiſh church, is ſo beclouded by ignorance, ſtiled darkneſs; by ſuperſtition and error, and by the miniſtry of a corrupt prieſthood, as to lay juſt foundation to ſay, that the witneſſes, with this interpretation, are emphatically propheſying in ſackcloth.

With the ſame idea conſiſts, very exactly, the *term* of time in which theſe witneſſes are appointed to propheſy:—It is during the whole reign of Antichriſt, the forty-two months, or twelve hundred and ſixty years. *And I will give*, or appoint, *unto my two witneſſes*, and *they ſhall propheſy a thouſand two hundred and threeſcore days, clothed in ſackcloth.*

With the ſame interpretation agrees the

declaration or expoſition of the angel in the next verſe. *Theſe are the* TWO OLIVE TREES *and the* TWO CANDLESTICKS *ſtanding before the God of the earth.* And, in fact, there ſeems nothing in the chapter but what may, with as great apparent truth, be reconciled to this interpretation, as to any other; and there are ſome things in it which cannot, with eaſe, be interpreted as applicable to the witneſſes, in any other ſenſe, underſtood or explained.

And if any ſhould be diſpoſed to believe, that the preſent reigning perſecuting infidel power, now waging war againſt all revealed religion, in France, is likely to be the *death* of theſe ſame witneſſes, who, for a long time, have already been made to propheſy in ſackcloth, perhaps the opinion may find ſupport from the declaration of the angel: *And when they ſhall have finiſhed their teſtimony, the beaſt that aſcendeth out of the bottomleſs pit, ſhall make war againſt them, and ſhall overcome them, and kill them.* If this interpretation be true, the mourning witneſſes are now ſuffering death in thoſe parts of myſtical Babylon, where the exiſting exterminating power has prevailed.

Did time allow, and was the preſent a

proper place in the order of my diſcourſe, I might expound upon the whole chapter, and eaſily reconcile any expreſſions which, at firſt view, might appear intricate, or doubtful, to the ſpirit of this interpretation. Suffice it, for the preſent, to ſay, that with this interpretation agrees well the declaration made reſpecting the injury theſe witneſſes are able to do their enemies. *And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies.* And of nothing ſhort of the adminiſtration of Heaven can it be ſaid: *Theſe have power to ſhut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy.* And of nothing ſhort of this can it be ſaid—*They have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to ſmite the earth with all plagues as often as they will.* And very correſpondent to the death of the witneſſes, and to the lying of their dead bodies in the *ſtreet of the great city*, is the death, the broken and demoliſhed ſtate of external religion in thoſe parts of Papal Rome, in which the preſent exterminating power hath prevailed. And equally correſpondent is the declaration, that *they of the people, and tongues, and nations;* probably thoſe nations and churches out of the communion of the church of Rome,

ſhall ſee their dead bodies three days and an half, and, by a more lively adminiſtration of the word and ordinances of God, *ſhall not ſuffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.*

And over the death of theſe witneſſes it is, that the men of this world *ſhall rejoice, and make merry, and ſhall ſend gifts one to another; becauſe theſe two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.*

To the reſurrection and final exaltation of theſe witneſſes well applies the verſes ſucceeding. *And after three days and an half, the ſpirit of life from God entered into them, and they ſtood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them that ſaw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven, ſaying unto them—Come up hither. And they aſcended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them.* During theſe events it is ſaid—*And the ſame hour was there an earthquake.* May it not mean the earthquake now *begun* —the preſent convulſions amongſt the nations, (for ſo in prophetic ſtile the word ſignifies) which are to be ſucceeded by the opening of the temple of God in heaven. *And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was ſeen, in his temple, the ark of his teſtament; and there were lightnings, and voi-*

this was a member of the Christian church, and set by God in the most eminent station in his church, and was honoured above all other princes that ever had been in the world, as the great protector of his church, and her deliverer from the persecuting power of that cruel scarlet-coloured beast. Mr. Lowman himself styles him *a Christian Prince, and Protector of the Christian Religion.* God is very careful not to reckon his own people among the Gentiles, the visible subjects of Satan, Num. xxiii. 9. *The people shall not be reckoned among the nations.* God will not enroll them with them; if they happen to be among them, he will be careful to set a mark upon them, as a note of distinction, Rev. vii. 3, &c. when God is reckoning up his own people, he leaves out those that have been noted for idolatry. As among the tribes that were sealed, Rev. viii. those idolatrous tribes of Ephraim and Dan are left out, and in the genealogy of Christ, Matth. i. those princes that were chiefly noted for idolatry, are left out. Much more would God be careful not to reckon his own people, especially such Christian princes as have been the most eminent instruments of overthrowing idolatry, amongst idolaters, and as members and

heads of that kingdom that is noted in ſcripture as the moſt notorious and infamous of all, for abominable idolatry, and oppoſition and cruelty to the true worſhippers of God. And eſpecially not to reckon them as properly belonging to one of thoſe ſeven heads of this monarchy, of which very heads it is particularly noted that they had on them the names of BLASPHEMY, which Mr. Lowman himſelf ſuppoſes to ſignify idolatry. It was therefore worthy of God, agreeable to his manner, and what might well be expected, that when he was reckoning up the ſeveral ſucceſſive heads of this beaſt, and Conſtantine and his ſucceſſors came in the way, and there was occaſion to mention them, to ſet a mark, or note of diſtinction on them, ſignifying that they did not properly belong to the beaſt, nor were to be reckoned as belonging to the heads, and therefore are to be ſkipped over in the reckoning, and Antichriſt, though the eighth head of the Roman empire, is to be reckoned the ſeventh head of the beaſt. This appears to me abundantly the moſt juſt and natural interpretation of Rev. xvii. 10, 11. It is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that God would take care to make ſuch a note in this prophetical deſcription

of this dreadful beaſt, and not, by any means to reckon Conſtantine as belonging properly to him.—If we reckon Conſtantine as a member of this beaſt having ſeven heads and ten horns, deſcribed chap. xvii. and as properly one of his heads, then he was alſo properly a member of the great red dragon with ſeven heads and ten horns that warred with the woman, chap. xii. For the ſeven heads and ten horns of that dragon, are plainly the ſame with the ſeven heads and ten horns of the beaſt. So that this makes Conſtantine a viſible member of the devil; for we are told expreſsly of that dragon, ver 9. that he was *that old ſerpent, called the Devil and Satan.* And to ſuppoſe that Conſtantine is reckoned as belonging to one of the heads of that dragon, is to make theſe prophecies inconſiſtent with themſelves. For here in this 12th chapter, we have repreſented a war between the dragon and the woman cloathed with the ſun; which woman, as all agree, is the church; but Conſtantine, as all do alſo agree, belonged to the woman, was a member of the Chriſtian church, and was on that ſide in the war againſt the dragon; yea, was the main inſtrument of that great victory that was obtained over the dragon there ſpo-

ken of, ver. 9—12. What an inconſiſtency therefore is it, to ſuppoſe that he was at the ſame time a member and head of that very dragon, which fought with the woman, and yet which Conſtantine himſelf fought with, overcame, and glorioufly triumphed over! It is not therefore to be wondered at, that God was careful to diſtinguiſh Conſtantine from the proper heads of the beaſt; it would have been a wonder if he had not. God ſeems to have been careful to diſtinguiſh him, not only in his word, but in his providence, by ſo ordering it that this Chriſtian emperor ſhould be removed from Rome, the city that God had given up to be the ſeat of the power of the beaſt, and of its heads, and that he ſhould have the ſeat of his empire elſewhere.

Conſtantine was made the inſtrument of giving a mortal wound to the heathen Roman empire, and giving it a mortal wound in its head, viz. the heathen emperors that were then reigning, Maxentius and Licinius.—But more eminently was this glorious change in the empire owing to the power of God's word, the prevalence of the glorious goſpel, by which Conſtantine himſelf was converted, and ſo became the inſtrument of the o-

verthrow of the heathen empire in the eaſt and weſt. The change that was then bro't to paſs, is repreſented as the deſtruction of the heathen empire, or the old heathen world, and therefore ſeems to be compared to that diſſolution of heaven and earth that ſhall be at the day of judgment, Rev. vi. 12. to the end. And therefore well might the heathen empire, under the head which was then reigning, be repreſented as wounded to death, chap. xiii. 3. It is much more likely, that the wound the beaſt had by a ſword, in his head, ſpoken of ver. 14. was the wound that the heathen empire had in its head, by that ſword which we read of, chap. i. 16. and xix. 15. that proceeds out of the mouth of Chriſt, than the wound that was given to the Chriſtian empire and emperor by the ſword of the heathen Goths. It is moſt likely that this deadly wound was by that ſword with which Michael made war with him, and overcame him, and caſt him to the earth, chap. xii. 9. and that the deadly wound which was given him, was given him at that very time. It is moſt likely, that the ſword that gave him this deadly wound, after which he ſtrangely revived, as though he roſe from the dead, was the ſame ſword with that which is ſpoken of,

as what ſhall at laſt utterly deſtroy him, ſo that he ſhall never riſe more, chap. xix. 15, 19, 20, 21. This wounding of the head of the beaſt by the deſtruction of the heathen empire, and converſion of the emperor to the Chriſtian truth, was a glorious event indeed of Divine Providence, worthy to be ſo much ſpoken of in prophecy. It is natural to ſuppoſe, that the mortal wounding of the head of that ſavage cruel beaſt, that is repreſented as conſtantly at war with the woman, and perſecuting the church of Chriſt, ſhould be ſome relief to the Chriſtian church; but, on the contrary, that wounding to death, that Mr. Lowman ſpeaks of, was the victory of the enemies of the Chriſtian church over her, and the wound received from them.

It is ſaid of that head of the empire that ſhall be next after the ſixth head, and next before Antichriſt, and that is not reckoned as properly one of the number of the heads of the beaſt, that *when it comes, it ſhall continue a ſhort ſpace,* chap. xvii. 10. By which we may underſtand, at leaſt, that it ſhall be one of the ſhorteſt, in its continuance, of the ſucceſſive heads. But the government ſeated at Ravenna, in the hands of the Goths, or of the deputies of the Greek emperors,

that thou ſhalt take up this proverb againſt the king of Babylon, and ſay—How hath the oppreſſor ceaſed! The golden city ceaſed!—The whole earth is at reſt, and is quiet; they break forth into ſinging: Yea, the fir-trees rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon, ſaying—Since thou art laid down, no feller has come up againſt us. Hell from beneath is moved for thee, to meet thee at thy coming: it ſtirreth up the dead for thee,

Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noiſe of thy viols; the worm is ſpread under thee, and the worms cover thee.

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer! Son of the Morning, how art thou cut down to the ground, which did weaken the nations!

They that ſee thee ſhall narrowly look upon thee and conſider thee, ſaying—Is this the man that made the earth to tremble? that did ſhake kingdoms? that made the world as a wilderneſs? and deſtroyed the cities thereof? that opened not the houſe of the priſoners?

For I will ariſe up againſt them ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, and cut off from Babylon the name and remnant, the ſon and nephew ſaith the Lord. I will alſo make it a poſſeſſion for the bittern, and pools of water; and I will

ſweep it with the beſom of deſtruction ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.

Having thus taken but a very brief ſurvey of the *joyful*, though *awful* expreſſions of exultation at the deſtruction of ancient Babylon, let us, for a moment, examine what there is, upon ſacred record, to anſwer this emblem in reſpect to the downfall of myſtical Babylon.—*And after theſe things I ſaw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a ſtrong voice, ſaying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul ſpirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich thro' the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, ſaying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her ſins, and that ye receive not of her plagues: For her ſins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as ſhe rewarded you, and double unto her double, according to her works: in the*

cup which she hath filled, fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burnt with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning. Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas! that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her: for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyme wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.—

And the fruits that thy ſoul luſteth after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou ſhalt find them no more at all. The merchants of theſe things, which were made rich by her, ſhall ſtand afar off, for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing. And ſaying, Alas, alas! that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and ſcarlet, and decked with gold, and precious ſtones, and pearls! For in one hour ſo great riches is come to nought. And every ſhip-maſter, and all the company in ſhips, and ſailors, and as many as trade by ſea, ſtood afar off, and cried, when they ſaw the ſmoke of her burning, ſaying— What city is *like unto this great city! And they caſt duſt on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, ſaying, Alas, alas! that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ſhips in the ſea by reaſon of her coſtlineſs! for in one hour ſhe is made deſolate. Rejoice over her,* thou *heaven, and* ye *holy apoſtles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. And a mighty angel took up a ſtone like a great mil-ſtone, and caſt* it *into the ſea, ſaying, Thus with violence ſhall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and ſhall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers, and muſicians,*

and of pipers, and trumpeters, ſhall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatſoever craft he be, *ſhall be found any more in thee; and the ſound of a milſtone ſhall be heard no more at all in thee; and the light of a candle ſhall ſhine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride ſhall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy ſorceries were all nations deceived, And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of ſaints, and of all that were ſlain upon the earth.*

" And after theſe things I heard a great " voice of much people in heaven, ſaying, " Alleluia! Salvation, and glory, and honor, " and power, unto the Lord our God: For " true and righteous are his judgments; for " he hath judged the great whore, which did " corrupt the earth with her fornication, " and hath avenged the blood of his ſervants " at her hand. And again they ſaid, Alle- " luia! And her ſmoke roſe up for ever and " ever. And the four and twenty elders, and " the four beaſts, fell down and worſhipped " God that ſat on the throne ſaying, Amen; " Alleluia!—And a voice came out of the " throne, ſaying, Praiſe our God, all ye his

" ſervants, and ye that fear him, both ſmall " and great. And I heard as it were the voice " of a great multitude, and as the voice of " many waters, and as the voice of mighty " thunderings, ſaying, Alleluia! for the Lord " God omnipotent reigneth.

Did time allow, I might follow ſeveral other prophecies in their application to this ſame anti-chriſtian church, and ſhew the evidence they all carry of a threatened overthrow; but I ſhall wave this for the preſent, expreſſing all neceſſary to be expreſſed in this place, in the words of an eminent Engliſh writer on this ſubject.*

" The prophecies of Daniel, St. Paul, and St. John, though *ſingly* of great weight, receive additional force if brought near and illuſtrated by each other. Having already examined them ſeparately, and apart, let us now conſider them together, and collect the evidence that ariſes when they are taken in one view, and form an entire and perfect whole.

From the moſt curſory view of the three predictions it is evident, that the ſame ſcheme

NOTE.

* See Hallifax's Sermons, page 328.

and conſtitution of things, the ſame events, perſons and times, the origin, continuance and deſtruction of the ſame tyrannical power, (which power, by Daniel, is noted by the appellation of the *little horn*, by St. Paul is denominated *the man of ſin*, and by St. John is branded with the titles of the *beaſt*, and the *falſe prophet:)* are *diſtinctly* foretold in all.

If Daniel deſcribes the kingdom in which the little horn was to ariſe, by ſuch emblems as can belong to none but the Roman, the ſame emblems, to pre-figure the kingdom of the beaſt and the falſe prophet, are alſo employed by St. John, from whom we farther learn, that his appropriated place of reſidence is the city of Rome.

If Daniel reſtrains the ſovereignty of this Roman power to the European or weſtern part of the empire, after it was divided into ten ſhares, the ſame reſtriction is intimated in one of the epiſtles of St. Paul, and is more explicitly declared by the beloved diſciple in the Apocalypſe. If Daniel repreſents the nature of this uſurped dominion as different from any other, St. Paul and St. John inſtruct us, that this diverſity conſiſts in its being ſpiritual, not a civil dominion, which is

therefore to be ſought for, *not* in the Heathen, but in *Chriſtian* Rome. If the inſtances in which this ſpiritual dominion is exerted, according to Daniel, be chiefly theſe—aſpiring to ſupreme and uncontroulable authority over the inhabitants of the earth—affecting divine titles and honors—enjoining the worſhip of dæmons and departed ſaints—prohibiting marriage—working falſe miracles—and perſecuting and killing thoſe who oppoſe its claims; the ſame particulars are related, and with new additions and explications in the writings of St. Paul and St. John. If the *duration* of this eccleſiaſtical polity be limited by Daniel to *a time*, and *times*, and *the dividing of time*, the ſame duration is expreſſed, and, in a variety of phraſes, by St. John, by whom the reign of the beaſt is fixed to a *time*, and *times*, and *half a time*, or to three years and an half, or forty-two months, or twelve hundred and ſixty days.

And laſtly, if the demolition of this extraordinary polity be denounced by the prophet of the Old Teſtament, the ſame intereſting event is promiſed by the two apoſtles of the New. Such a number of coincidencies, all ſo ſtrange and unuſual in their kinds, to be found in the compoſitions of

three perſons, living in different, and one in a very remote period, cannot fairly be aſcribed to any other cauſe than to the impulſe of the *ſelf-ſame ſpirit*, who *taught them all things*, which it was neceſſary ſhould be communicated for the admonition of the church of Chriſt, *upon whom the ends of the world* ſhould *come*.

Now of the characters recorded in ſcripture, as the undoubted marks of Antichriſt, many, at leaſt, have been ſhewn to belong, excluſively, to the *tyranny* now exiſting in Papal Rome. For, *firſt* of all, this power is certainly a Roman one: *Secondly*, it is confined to the limits of the Latin, or weſtern empire: *Thirdly*, it aroſe among the ten kingdoms into which that empire was parted by the northern barbarians; *Fourthly*, its throne or ſeat is in the city of Rome: *Fifthly*, it is a Chriſtian power; and, *ſixthly*, it is diſcriminated from all others, by being of the ſpiritual or eccleſiaſtic kind. Theſe are circumſtances ſo plainly realized in that part of Chriſtendom which is ſubject to the Roman Pontiff, that it is not poſſible, by any art or ſubtilty of our adverſaries, they can be evaded or denied."*

NOTE.

* See the eleventh of Biſhop Hurd's Sermons on the Prophe-

After ſuch teſtimony and volumes to the ſame effect which might be produced, if neceſſary, you will not deem it harſh, uncharitable, or unfair, if I ſay, the object pointed at in theſe prophecies, muſt infallibly be the preſent *tyrannical*, though, bleſſed be God! the *tottering* church of Papal Rome. This is the haughty *Babylon*, and this is *the woman arrayed in purple and ſcarlet-colour, and decked with gold and precious ſtones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations, and filthineſs of her fornication.* And this is the *woman*, upon whoſe *forehead was a name written*, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, *and* ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And this is the woman that was ſeen *drunken with the blood of the ſaints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jeſus.* And this is the *woman* that is denominated by the *great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth.*

If, in this place, you think proper to aſk any thing reſpecting the *riſe*, *continuance*, and final deſtruction of this multi-formed

NOTE.

cies, where the prophetic characters of Antichriſt, above deſcribed, are ſhewn, and in a very ſatisfactory way, to be, fairly, applicable to the church of Rome.

devouring monſter, I anſwer, briefly, that according to the preſent moſt approved calculations we are authorized to ſay, that the *origin* of this anti-chriſtian power was gradual, though its actual continuance is ſeveral times plainly expreſſed by the prophets to be *twelve hundred and ſixty years.*

" Sometime between A. D. 500, and the end of the reign of the Goths, which was A. D. 553, when Narſes took Rome and their dominions in Italy from them, and began the exarchate of Ravenna, the reckoning of twelve hundred and ſixty years muſt begin. But Antichriſt cannot be ſuppoſed to ſtart up into view at once, in a ſudden manner, as he will not fall without *many preparatory circumſtances.* He became, by degrees, diſtinguiſhable, and doubtleſs his ruin will be brought on by ſeveral ſteps in Providence.

Therefore, if we begin at the earlieſt date, when we may ſuppoſe he firſt preſented himſelf to view, the end of the period will bring us to the firſt ſteps towards his fall; but if we begin at the lateſt time, *twelve hundred and ſixty years,* will bring us to the complete ruin of his power.

The firſt open breach between the weſtern and eaſtern churches was, as we have

faid, about the year 500. To reckon twelve hundred and fixty years from that time brings us to A. D. 1760. And it is remarkable that from that very year, when the Jefuits had excited the refentments of the kings of Europe, which finally brought on the diffolution of that order, the power of the church of Rome has been very apparently declining, and feveral plain fteps have been taken by the providence of God toward her utter deftruction. Convents have been fuppreffed, and their revenues feized in kingdoms where fuperftition had long reigned without controul.

The infernal Courts of Inquifition have received fevere checks, by which they are likely to be foon annihilated, in countries moft noted for Romifh bigotry.

Liberty of confcience has been given to Proteftants in nations which had long been devoted to the papacy.

Roman Catholic princes begin to withhold from Rome the cuftomary revenues. Even a late Pope, by his liberal writings, has lent his help to render Romifh fuperftition ridiculous. And *appearances are ftill proceeding.*"*

NOTE.

* Langdon on Revelation, page 266—7

If, on the ground of the calculation juſt now mentioned, we proceed, the concluſion obviouſly is, that the deſtruction of Babylon is *very near at hand.* If to 1760, the date of the commencement of her fall, be added fifty years, the term in which ſhe is ſuppoſed to be falling, the ſum will be the period of her expected overthrow. And from appearances, now before us, we have good ground to conclude, that, if the decree of Heaven goes on for ſixteen years to come, until 1810, as it has for four years paſt, the denunciation for the deſtruction of Babylon will be fully accompliſhed.

As to times and ſeaſons, it is not for us exactly to know; and whatever miſtakes we make in our calculation of numbers, it does not however, at all alter the decree, or poſtpone the effect.

Hear the teſtimony of an eminent divine on this ſubject.*

" Whatever miſtakes the Jewiſh Rabbies " might fall into in their interpretation of Da- " niel's ſeventy weeks, and in their attempts " to fix the preciſe time of the Meſſiah's com-

NOTE.

* Doctor Bellamy's diſcourſe on the Millennium, publiſhed in 1758,—page 34 of this work.

„ ing; and whatever miſtaken notions any of
" them had about the nature of his kingdom,
" as though it was to be of this world, and
" he to appear in all earthly grandeur, and
" although his coming, to ſome, might ſeem
" to be ſo long delayed, that they began to
" give up all hopes of it, and to contrive
" ſome other meaning to the ancient pro-
" phecies, or even to call in queſtion the in-
" ſpiration of the prophets; yet neither the
" *miſtakes* of ſome, nor the *infidelity* of o-
" thers, at all, altered the caſe. Days, and
" months, and years haſtened along, and one
" revolution, among the kingdoms of the
" earth, followed upon another, till the *ful-*
" *neſs of time* was come, till all things were
" ripe, and *then*, behold, the Meſſiah was
" born! Even ſo it ſhall be now.

" Whatever miſtakes Chriſtian Divines
" may fall into, in their interpretation of ſix
" hundred and ſixty-ſix, the number of the
" beaſt, or in their endeavors to fix the pre-
" ciſe time when the twelve hundred and
" ſixty years of Antichriſt's reign ſhall begin
" and end; or whatever wrong notions ſome
" may have had, or may have about the na-
" ture of the Millennium, as though Chriſt

" was to reign, perſonally, on earth; and if
" ſome, mean while, begin to think that all
" things will go on as they have done, and to
" conclude, that the *expectation* of theſe glori-
" ous days which has prevailed in the Chriſ-
" tian church, from the beginning, is merely
" a groundleſs fancy; yet none of theſe things
" will at all alter the caſe. Days, and months,
" and years, will haſten along, and one revo-
" lution, among the kingdoms of the earth,
" follow upon another, until the *fulneſs of*
" *time* is come; till all things are ripe for
" the event; and then the miniſters of Chriſt
" will accompliſh, in *reality*, what St. John
" ſaw in his viſions: *I ſaw an angel fly in the*
" *midſt of heaven, having the everlaſting goſ-*
" *pel to preach unto them that dwell on the*
" *earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and*
" *tongue, and people.* And then ſhall it come
" to paſs, that the veil of ignorance which
" hath ſo long ſpread over all nations *ſhall*
" *be deſtroyed*, and knowledge ſhall ſo great-
" ly increaſe, that it ſhall be as though *the*
" *light of the moon* were *as the light of the*
" *ſun; and the light of the ſun ſevenfold*, un-
" til *the knowledge of the Lord cover the earth*
" *as the waters do the ſea.* And then there
" *ſhall be nothing to hurt or offend in all God's*

" *holy mountain.* For Babylon ſhall fall, Sa-
" tan be bound, and Chriſt will reign, and
" truth and righteouſneſs univerſally prevail
" a *thouſand years.*"

Having, thus, conſidered who it is over whoſe deſtruction all holy beings are called to rejoice, and ſaid ſomething of the *origin, continuance,* and expected downfall of this power, I proceed,

II. To conſider the *cauſe* of this awful diſaſter.

Rejoice over her thou heaven, and ye holy apoſtles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.

If we confine our reſearches after the procuring cauſe of this diſaſter to the appendages of Babylon, we ſhall find it in *her own guilt.*

Permit me to point out her guilt as hinted at in the chapter from which my text is taken.

1. Babylon is charged with the extent of her idolatry.

The kings of the earth have committed fornication with her; that is, have been embraced by her idolatrous communion—united with her in a general apoſtacy from God.

2. She is charged with a ſelfiſh, mercena-

ry ſpirit in the concerns of her adminiſtration. *The merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.* "By the merchants underſtand all ſuch as trade in Babylon's wares; her pleaſing and coſtly wares of pardons, maſſes and indulgencies, by which ſo many are enriched; as well as thoſe who trade in images, and in all the coſtly trappings of their idolatrous worſhip, and eſpecially in the ſouls of men."

3. She is ſpoken of as *contaminating* and endangering thoſe who tarried within her limits, expoſing the people of God to be bewitched by her ſorceries. *And I heard another voice from heaven, ſaying, Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her ſins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.*

My brethren, doth not this ſolemn decree, for the ſeparation of God's people from the ſins and abominations of Babylon, preach to us in theſe United States, even to us, who inhabit this aſylum of the diſtreſſed, to beware of the habits, cuſtoms, influence and inchanting prerogatives of thoſe who are fleeing before the vengeance of an incenſed God? *Be not partakers of her ſins, that ye receive not of her plagues.*

This caution is ſupported by the annun-

ciation of the angel of God. *And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation: and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.*

4. The guilt of Babylon is spoken of as sending forth a cry: *For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.* Either a cry of the persecuted and suffering church, or a cry for vengeance. *And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little*

ſeaſon, until their fellow-ſervants alſo, and their brethren, that ſhould be killed as they were, ſhould be fulfilled.

5. A *remembrance* of the perſecuting ſpirit of this anti-chriſtian power is ſpoken of as warranting a decree for vengeance from the Court of Heaven. *Reward her even as ſhe rewarded you, and double unto her double, according to her work; in the cup which ſhe hath filled, fill to her double.*

It is probable this injunction or command is given to the miniſters—to the miniſtering angels of God's judgments, in behalf of his church; and though it doth not call for the peaceful followers of the Lamb to wage a carnal warfare with this intolerant power, yet it doubtleſs authoriſes our prayers that her deſtruction may be ſpeedy and inevitable.

6. The laſt *inherent* cauſe of this awful calamity I ſhall mention, is found in the pride and haughtineſs, luxury and voluptuouſneſs of this ſelf exalted anti-chriſtian power.—*How much ſhe hath glorified herſelf and lived deliciouſly, ſo much torment and ſorrow give her. For ſhe ſaith in her heart—I ſit a queen, and am no widow, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow. Therefore ſhall her plagues come in one*

day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.

I am led to conclude this branch of my discourse, by adding, that the *final* cause of the destruction of Babylon is the *sentence* of God against her. This sentence is pronounced by an angel from the court, from the *tribunal* of heaven. *And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.* If you ask the reason of this judicial sentence from the tribunal of heaven, it is said—*For by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.*

Having pointed out who it is over whose destruction holy angels and men are called upon to rejoice, and considered the *cause* of this awful catastrophe, my subject leads,

III. To consider the *means* by which this event shall be brought about.

And what *means*, my audience, should you suppose might be adequate to such a task?

to the taſk of overturning a power which hath ſubſiſted more than twelve hundred years, ſupported by the kings of the earth, who drink of her cup, and delight in her forceries—who have long ſince lent their aid for her ſupport againſt the voice of reaſon—the demands of Heaven, and the cries of periſhing thouſands?—What power is equal to the taſk of accompliſhing even the *decree of Heaven* againſt ſuch might, ſuch united force as Babylon is able to bring into the field? more eſpecially, when you conſider that for the terror of her enemies, and for the comfort of her friends, this intolerant power profeſſes to have in poſſeſſion the keys of heaven and of hell?

Retreat you will be ready to ſay from ſuch a taſk! Let no one be ſo preſumptuous as to provoke her to anger, as to ſtir up her fury! —Many have been devoured by this leviathan, by this multi-formed, inſatiable monſter; and God forbid that any more ſhould be ſwallowed up, whilſt they are able to make but a feeble, though honeſt attempt!

Our fears, my friends, are relieved whilſt I read to you, from the inſpiration of God, that the angel that pronounces the decree of deſtruction is commiſſioned from the Court

of Heaven; has *great power, and that the earth is lightened with his glory.* And to ſupport the executioner of the ſentence it is added, *for ſtrong is the Lord God who judgeth her.*

As then the decree hath its origin in heaven, and the promulgation of it is by a meſſenger from Heaven, we are authoriſed to look to Heaven for MEANS to accompliſh what its decree hath ordained.

Did it pleaſe the Lord of Hoſts, in ancient time, to promiſe deliverance to the Hebrews in Egyptian bondage; and did he not graciouſly provide the means of deliverance? —Was it in after times threatened againſt this rebellious people that, for their hypocriſy and ſins, they ſhould go into captivity; and did not a righteous God provide the means to execute the ſentence?—Hear the appointment of heaven to this taſk. *O Aſſyrian! the rod of mine anger, and the ſtaff in their hand is mine indignation! I will ſend him againſt an hypocritical nation, and againſt the people of my wrath will I give him a charge to take the ſpoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire in the ſtreets. Howbeit he meaneth not ſo, neither doth his*

heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy, and cut off nations not a few.

Wherefore it shall come to pass, that, when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon Mount Zion, and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks; for he saith, by the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent: and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man.

I cite this passage at length, not only that the sentiments under consideration may be supported, as to *means* of execution, appointed by the decree of Heaven; but to teach that means may be appointed, and may even execute the will of Heaven, and yet be themselves wholly ignorant of the God they are serving—be vastly sinful in what they do, and be, finally, sorely punished for the ungodly deed.

Again, did it please God to promise deliverance to the captive Jews from Babylon; and did he not gird his man for the purpose? *Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of*

kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates ſhall not be ſhut: I will go before thee, and make the crooked places ſtraight: I will break in pieces the gates of braſs, and cut in ſunder the bars of iron. For Jacob my ſervant's ſake, and Iſrael mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have ſurnamed thee though thou haſt not known me. I am the Lord, and there is none elſe, there is no God beſides me: I girded thee, though thou haſt not known me.

Theſe examples of means provided for the accompliſhment of mercies promiſed, or for the execution of judgments denounced, in the wiſdom of God, lay good foundation for us to proceed, and afford unerring direction to us in our enquries after the means or methods which God will provide and uſe, for the execution of the awful ſentence of which our ſubject treats.

Babylon is fallen, is fallen! But by what means is ſhe to be brought down?

The ſtate of this anti-chriſtian church is ſpoken of under ſeveral figures or emblems, all of which are to have their end in ſome method ſuited to the deſtruction of the original figure.

If we aſk after the deſtruction of this

church under the figure of Babylon, we ſhall find the means pre-figured under the pouring out of the ſixth vial—the vial which all preſent expoſitors allow to be now running.

And the ſixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the eaſt might be prepared.

I need not detain you here to ſay that the river Euphrates ſignifies the wealth, the revenues, the ſtrength and ſupport of whatever kind, by which Papal Babylon hath, in time paſt, been upheld:—And if you wiſh to know whether this river hath been, or is now drying up, you may be informed by aſking thoſe who can tell to what end the revenues of the church of Rome have lately come. You may aſk where are her privileges and prerogatives, her churches, her church-lands, her wonted revenues from princes and from ſubjects, eſpecially, in reſpect to thoſe parts of the empire on which the contents of this vial have already been poured?—You may aſk, where is that faith, that *implicit* faith which was once put in her?—that domination which ſhe maintained over the conſciences of men?—Where are her idols—her maſſes—her ſuperſtitions

—her miniſters?—As to her revenues, it will be anſwered, they have ceaſed;—as to faith, confidence and truſt in this once reputed fountain of truth and infallibility, it will be ſaid, it is departed; her ſubjects have thrown off the maſk, and refuſe to be hoodwinked any longer. As to her idols, ſo far as there was any value in them, they are now paſſing in coin; and as to her miniſters, they are executed and diſperſed. Even the college of Sorbonne* is obliged to yield up her magi, and give them, to her foes, a prey.

If you aſk why the drying up of the river Euphrates is ſpoken of, *that the way of the kings of the eaſt may be prepared?* I anſwer, in a word, that as ancient Euphrates was dried up, that the way of her enemies, who came from the eaſt, might be prepared, in their approach to her deſtruction; ſo this myſtical river is dried up, that the city itſelf may become an eaſy prey.

On this paſſage hear the language of a judicious divine.†

" In the drying up of the river Euphrates,

NOTES.

* A celebrated inſtitution, or college, for the reſidence of doctors, profeſſors, and ſtudents in divinity, at Paris, who ſuffered in the general calamity.

† Burkit in loco.

manifeſt alluſion is had to the manner of old Babylon's deſtruction. The river Euphrates *ran through old Babylon*, and was a greater defence to it than its celebrated walls, which, for thickneſs and height, were the wonder of the world. Cyrus, "the leader of the Kings of the Eaſt," when he took Babylon, cut many ditches, and let the river Euphrates run out, and ſo he and his ſoldiers entered the city, and took it. As the drying up of Euphrates, *then*, was an immediate forerunner of the deſtruction of Babylon; in like manner, the drying up of Euphrates, ſignify it what it will, ſhall be the immediate forerunner of the deſtruction of anti-chriſtian Babylon, whenever it ſhall be. The Romiſh Euphrates being dried up, the Romiſh Babylon will haſten, amain, towards its final ruin."

Whether the Euphrates of the Romiſh Babylon is not already ſo far dried up, as that the Kings of the Eaſt have made a breach upon her, let facts and daily intelligence determine.

What though you call the inſtruments of this ſucceſsful attack upon Rome a lawleſs banditti—a race of infidels—men, who profeſs to "know no God but Liberty, and no

Gospel but their Constitution."—What then! are they not, in the hand of God, as well chosen instruments for the execution of threatened vengeance upon mystical Babylon, as the heathenish kings of the east were, for the same design, upon Babylon of the Chaldees?

Those who look through the great plan, viewing the purposes of Heaven upon a broad scale, believe and know that Kings and Captains, in all ages; nay, that even wicked men and devils, in the fullness of their rage, are yet under the divine controul; that the wrath of the whole, in the end, shall *praise him*, and the *remainder he is able to restrain.*

In running through with the destruction of Babylon, the prophet notices a movement of a very extraordinary nature; an exertion made to oppose the deluge which Almighty God is causing to overspread the anti-christian world. But, alas! a feeble exertion, and, in the end, does but expedite the overthrow denounced.

And I saw three unclean spirits, like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. The apostle proceeds to interpret the objects presented. *For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles,*

which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

" In the foregoing verſes," ſaith the author juſt now cited, " an account was given of the " ſubject upon which the *ſixth* vial was pour- " ed out, namely, upon the river Euphrates. " Here we have an effect that followed there- " upon; a warlike expedition, or gathering " to battle. Where, note 1. The principal " commanders, in this battle, the Dragon, " the Beaſt, and the Falſe Prophet.

" 2. The inſtruments employed and made " uſe of by them who are ſaid to be, for their " nature, *ſpirits;* for their quality, *unclean;* " for their number, *three;* for their *ſimilitude* " and reſemblance *like frogs;* namely, with " reſpect to their corrupt origin, and their " numbers—they ſwarm and croak in all " places, and live both in the water and up- " on the earth:—by all which, many inter- " preters underſtand emiſſaries, miſſionaries, " negociators, ſolicitors and legates, ſent " forth, and employed by Antichriſt for the " ſupport and ſtrengthening of him and his " kingdom, by ſoliciting the kings of the " earth to join together in battle againſt his " enemies."

We need no teſtimony to ſupport the opinion that the nuncios, legates, biſhops and monks of the church of Rome have been induſtriouſly, and, ſpeaking after the manner of men, but too ſucceſsfully employed in ranging the preſent combination of kings againſt the progreſs of the divine decree.—But *Babylon is fallen, is fallen* in the councils of heaven, and no popiſh emiſſaries ſhall prevail to parry the fatal blow. True, they have boaſted their art and ſucceſs in parrying the arguments, and the appeals of Proteſtants in time paſt, but they cannot parry the judgments of God.

And he gathered them together into a place, called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

" He, that is Almighty God, by his per-
" miſſive providence, ſuffered the kings of
" the earth to hearken to Antichriſt's miſſion-
" aries, and to aſſemble and gather together,
" as Jabin and Siſera gathered together a-
" gainſt Iſrael to their own deſtruction: And
" whereas the place of their gathering to-
" gether and deſtruction is called ARMAGED-
" DON, that is ſo named from the event of
" the battle, ſignifying ſuch a place where
" the enemies of the Lord ſhall be deſtroy-
" ed."

If any are disposed to enquire after this place of destruction, let them peruse the accounts of the many bloody battles which have been fought since resistance has been made to the purposes of heaven in the *existing* decree, and anticipate the destruction yet to follow.—One hundred and fifty, if not two hundred thousand, are supposed to have perished in all the conflicts, battles, sieges, assasinations and executions which have taken place since the present vial has begun to run. Witness, especially, the late very serious rencounters between the forces of France and the allied armies, in and about the Austrian Netherlands, as well as upon all their frontiers, and we may add also the massacres of internal commotion.—Must not such torrents of blood be placed to the account of the *battle of the great day of God Almighty?*

If this anti-christian power, for her apostacy from God, and for her idolatry, be figured forth to us under the degrading and abominable idea of a prostitute, her destruction is said to come from the hatred of the ten kings or kingdoms heretofore in her idolatrous communion.

And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet;

but receive power as kings one hour, or at the ſame time, *with the beaſt. Theſe have one mind, and ſhall give their power and ſtrength unto the beaſt.*

But, in the day of God's wrath, whilſt the *ſixth* vial continues to deliver its myſterious, but avenging contents, *the ten kings ſhall hate the whore, and ſhall make her deſolate and naked, and ſhall eat her fleſh, and burn her with fire.*

If it pleaſe God to ſet forth this anti-chriſtian power under the denomination of a beaſt, his deſtruction, with his adherents, is threatened by an angel of God, not only as to this life, but as to the life to come.

And the third angel followed them, ſaying with a loud voice, If any man worſhip the beaſt, and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the ſame ſhall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation: and he ſhall be tormented with fire and brimſtone in the preſence of the holy angels, and in the preſence of the Lamb.

If it pleaſe God to ſpeak of this idolatrous and intolerant power under the character of the *man of ſin, whoſe coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and ſigns, and*

lying wonders; his deſtruction is denounced as being brought about by the vindictive juſtice of God:—*Whom the Lord ſhall conſume with the ſpirit of his mouth, and ſhall deſtroy with the brightneſs of his coming.*

If this power is repreſented as interwoven with the civil power of the *fourth* great kingdom of the world; if the civil and eccleſiaſtical power of Rome forms *the iron and the clay,* well may its deſtruction be predicted by the rolling of the ſtone (cut out, not with human hands, but by the providence of God,) againſt the legs, or rather the feet and toes of this kingdom, which is founded of iron and clay—partly *ſtrong* and partly *weak*—partly *true* and partly *falſe:* well, I ſay, may deſtruction come from the ſtone prepared of God with this deſign. *Thou ſaweſt,* ſaith Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar, *till that a ſtone was cut out without hands, which ſmote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces: And the ſtone that ſmote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.*

Can I better ſet before you the interpretation of this portion of prophecy, than in the words of Biſhop Newton, ſupported by

the celebrated Mr. Mede?* "As the fourth kingdom, or the Roman empire, was repreſented in a twofold ſtate; firſt, ſtrong and flouriſhing, *with legs of iron*, and then weakened and divided, with *feet and toes, part of iron and part of clay;* ſo this *fifth* kingdom, or the kingdom of Chriſt, is deſcribed likewiſe in *two* ſtates, which Mr. Mede rightly diſtinguiſheth by the names of *regnum lapidis*, the kingdom of the ſtone, and *regnum montis*, the kingdom of the mountain; the *firſt*, when the *ſtone was cut out of the mountain without hands;* the *ſecond*, when it became itſelf *a mountain, and filled the whole earth.*

"*The ſtone was cut out of the mountain without hands.* The kingdom of Chriſt was firſt ſet up while the Roman empire was in its full ſtrength, with *legs of iron.* The Roman empire was afterwards divided into ten leſſer kingdoms, the remains of which are ſubſiſting at preſent. The image is ſtill ſtanding upon his *feet and toes of iron and clay.* The kingdom of Chriſt is yet *a ſtone of ſtumbling, and a rock of offence.* But the ſtone will, *one day*, ſmite the image upon the feet

NOTE.

* Newton on the Prophecies, vol. ii. page 244.

and toes, and deſtroy it utterly, and will itſelf *become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth:* or, in other words, *the kingdoms of this world ſhall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Chriſt,* and he *ſhall reign for ever and ever.*

" We have, therefore ſeen the kingdom of the *ſtone,* but we have *not yet ſeen* the KINGDOM OF THE MOUNTAIN. Some parts of this prophecy ſtill remain to be fulfilled; but the exact completion of the other parts will not ſuffer us to doubt of the accompliſhment of the reſt alſo, in due ſeaſon."

And what period of time, my brethren, hath ever looked ſo likely to be introductory to the regnum montis, to the kingdom of the mountain, as the preſent? Is not the *ſtone* now rolling againſt the feet and toes of the mighty image? And when it ſhall have ſplit in ſunder the heterogeneous and unnatural mixture, of which the empire of Rome is now compoſed; when the civil and eccleſiaſtical authority (which hath ſo long compoſed what, in the dignity and pride of anti-chriſtian glory, hath been ſtiled THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE,) ſhall be ſeparated or diſſolved, there will be good ground to believe, that the empire of Jeſus Chriſt—the regnum montis, will begin.

The rolling of the ſtone, then, and the increaſe of it to the ſize of a mountain, may juſtly be placed to the account of *means* ordained of God for the deſtruction of myſtical Babylon—the empire of the church of Rome.

And if it may not be preſuming too far, I would venture to aſſert, that appearances are not only now favoring the introduction of the REGNUM MONTIS, but that it has already begun, and is conſiderably advanced in its progreſs. But,

How ſhall the *little ſtone* become a mountain, and how ſhall it deſtroy this mighty image, this anti-chriſtian coloſſus, which hath ſtood ſo many a ſtorm?

Muſt it not *acquire a power—gain a momentum* equal to the taſk?

Muſt there not be ſome power applied beſide reaſon and argument; the force of which this power hath found means ſo long to withſtand?—Undoubtedly, you will ſay, there muſt be ſuch a power—but where is it to be found, and from what quarter muſt it come?

Behold, my brethren, behold in the ſcenes now paſſing in the drama of Europe—another Aſſyrian and his hoſt!—another *ax* in the hand of *him that heweth therewith,* and

another *saw* in the hand of *him that shaketh it!*—

In the same group behold another Cyrus, *whose right hand* the Lord hath *holden to subdue nations before him*—before whom the Lord *loosened the loins of kings*, and opened before him the *two-leaved gates*. Before whom the Lord went to *make crooked places straight;* to break in pieces *the gates of brass*, and *cut in sunder the bars of iron:*—Whom the Lord *surnamed*, and whom he *girded* with power, though the Assyrian *knew him not.*

If this language seem too mysterious to any, let them receive a familiar stile, and behold the regnum montis, the kingdom of the mountain, begun on the Fourth of July, 1776, when the *birth* of the MAN-CHILD—the hero of civil and religious liberty took place in these United States. Let them read the predictions of heaven respecting the increase of his dominion—that he was *to rule all nations with a rod of iron;* that is, bring them into complete and absolute subjection; and that the young hero might be equal to this mighty conquest, he is supported by an omnipotent arm; he is *caught up unto God, and to his throne.* Behold, then, this hero of America wielding the standard of civil

and religious liberty over theſe United States! —Follow him, in his ſtrides, acroſs the Atlantic!—See him, with his ſpear already in the heart of the beaſt!—See tyranny, civil and eccleſiaſtical, bleeding at every pore!—See the votaries of the tyrants; of the beaſts; of the falſe prophets, and ſerpents of the earth, ranged in battle array, to withſtand the progreſs and dominion of him, who hath commiſſion to break down the uſurpations of tyranny—to let the *priſoner out of the priſon-houſe;* and to ſet the vaſſal in bondage free from his chains—to level the mountains—to raiſe the valleys, and to prepare an high way for the Lord!

Againſt all oppoſition to the execution of this decree, the Lord, from the heavens, will laugh. *He that ſitteth in the heavens ſhall laugh, the Lord ſhall have them in deriſion.—Thou ſhalt break them with a rod of iron; thou ſhalt daſh them in pieces like a potter's veſſel. Be wiſe now, therefore, O ye kings, be inſtructed ye judges of the earth.*

It ſeems no unnatural concluſion from ancient prophecy, and from preſent appearances, that in order to uſher in the dominion of our glorious Immanuel, as predic-

ted to take place, and uſually called the *latter-day-glory*, TWO GREAT REVOLUTIONS are to take place; the *firſt* outward and political; the *ſecond* inward and ſpiritual.—The *firſt* is now taking place; its happy effects we, in this country, already enjoy; and O that the Lord would graciouſly put it into the hearts of his miniſters and churches, nay, of all now under the dominion of civil and religious liberty, to begin the *ſecond* revolution, that which is *inward* and *ſpiritual*, even the *revolution* of the heart. Come forth then, may we not pray, all ye votaries of truth! ye advocates for the ſpiritual empire of the LATTER DAY, come forth!—

Let the ſtandard of truth and of duty, the ſtandard of allegiance to God, through faith in his beloved Son, be ſet up! Let us preach, let us pray, let us fight, manfully, the warfare of faith—not doubting, but in God's own time, the glorious things, of which the prophets have ſpoken, ſhall be fulfilled!

Behold the *firſt* revolution, (through the agency of the hero of America) in this country, already begun, nay, already accompliſhed!—why not then NOW begin the ſecond?

What encouragement is there to proceed, whilſt we ſee ſome of the laſt events taking

place, under the sixth vial, which are to precede the glory of the latter day, to be *ushered* in immediately on the pouring out of the seventh!

I have now gone through with a consideration of the *means* appointed of God for the overthrow of mystical Babylon. These means, I make no doubt, you will believe fully adequate to the execution of the decree. It now only remains that I consider,

Lastly, The foundation which the execution of this decree lays for universal joy.

Rejoice over her thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.

If there was no other cause of rejoicing on this mighty occasion, but the invitation of heaven to the general concert, sufficient cause might be found for the emotion the event demands.

But we are not called to rejoice without sufficient light afforded, to guide us in this rational and Christian exercise.

1. There is cause of universal joy on this occasion, because by the destruction of mystical Babylon, the great Michael of the church hath gained a very important victory over the principalities and powers of hell. The

placing of one, bearing *horns like a lamb*, and ſpeaking with the mouth *of a dragon*, in higheſt authority in the church of Chriſt, is allowed, on all hands, to be a maſter-piece among all the devices of Satan; the higheſt, the moſt crafty and ſucceſsful effort which the wicked one hath ever played off againſt the intereſts of Chriſt in any age of the world. —Well then may the detection and overthrow of Satan, in this ſcheme of ruling the church, in the garb of an angel of light, demand the livelieſt acclamations of general joy.

2. A participation in this general anthem of praiſe, at the downfall of Babylon, is demanded, as matter of exultation on the part of the holy prophets, apoſtles and martyrs, whoſe blood ſhe had formerly ſhed. *Rejoice over her thou heaven, and ye holy apoſtles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.*

And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of ſaints, and of all that were ſlain upon the earth.

3. There is cauſe of joy, at this event, on the part of the church, as in her advancings to her promiſed perfection and glory, ſhe ſhall not be obſtructed by the perſecutions, maſſacres, inquiſitions, tortures, and thunders of thisapoſtate church of Rome.

4. On the part of all who have received, and now maintain the teſtimony of God, as recorded in his holy word, there is cauſe of joy, that the fulfilment of the many prophecies reſpecting *Antichriſt*, the *man of ſin*, &c. are fulfilled, and thereby an accumulation of evidence is obtained of the authenticity of the ſcriptures, as being in deed and in truth the LIVELY ORACLES OF GOD.

5. There is cauſe of joy, in this ſolemn and affecting event, becauſe it is one of the *laſt* things to take place, before it ſhall be proclaimed—*The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Chriſt, and he ſhall reign for ever and ever.*

And I heard a loud voice ſaying in heaven, Now is come ſalvation, and ſtrength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Chriſt; for the accuſer of our brethren is caſt out, which accuſed them before God day and night.

This ſubject being a leading object, in this work, you will permit me to preſent, in a very brief manner, the ſeveral denunciations of wrath againſt myſtical Babylon, and ſhew the acclamations of joy that immediately follow, on account of the important and intereſting events which follow.

Is the anti-chriſtian power of Rome ſet

forth by the *iron and clay* of the great image? and is it to be dashed in pieces by the stone cut out without hands? immediately it is predicted, that the stone that smote the image became a *great mountain and filled the whole earth.*

Is this intolerant power represented by the *horn which came up* among the ten horns;—by the horn which *had eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things. I beheld, then,* saith the prophet, *because of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of Man came in the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*

Is this power spoken of as to rise, after the *falling away,* in the character of the MAN OF SIN—*the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or worshipped; so that he as God, sitteth in the*

temple of God, ſhewing himſelf that he is God —it is the ſame *whom the Lord ſhall conſume with the ſpirit of his mouth, and ſhall deſtroy with the* BRIGHTNESS OF HIS COMING.

And after the deſtruction of Babylon, as recorded in this nineteenth chapter, *I heard*, ſaith the apoſtle, *a great voice of much people in heaven, ſaying, Alleluia: Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his ſervants at her hand.*

In the concluſion of the whole ſcene of diſtreſs, of which the nineteenth chapter of this book is a lively picture, the twentieth chapter begins with the introduction of the Millennial-day.

And I ſaw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomleſs pit, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old ſerpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a THOUSAND YEARS.

After ſuch deſcriptions of ſucceſs, and joy to follow, in favor of the church of Chriſt, after the downfall of Babylon, you will not

wonder that the church ſhould be called, nor that ſhe ſhould be diſpoſed to rejoice at the overthrow.

I have now gone through with the doctrinal part of my diſcourſe: I have conſidered *who it is*, over whoſe deſtruction holy beings are called upon to rejoice—the *cauſe* of this diſaſter—the *means* employed to bring it about, and the foundation it lays for univerſal joy.

If, after ſuch lengthy illuſtrations, any reflexions might be admitted, may they not, briefly, in view of the objects of this work, be ſuch as follow?

1. If the general ſcope of our ſubject is allowed to be conſonant to the word of God, and be truly applicable to thoſe objects towards which it has been directed; no one can be at a loſs for a key to the providence of God in the national, civil, and eccleſiaſtical convulſions which are now ſhaking, to the foundation, ſome of the moſt potent powers in Europe.

Is not the day of the divine vengeance come?—Are not the vials of the divine indignation now pouring out?—Is not Babylon, like a millſtone, ſinking into the ſea?—Is not this the time of the falling of the ſtars

—the dethroning, in church and ſtate, of thoſe who, by their iniquities and tyrannies, have out-run the compaſſion of their God? *And the ſtars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree caſteth her untimely figs, when ſhe is ſhaken of a mighty wind.*

Is not this the time of the riſe of the beaſt from the bottomleſs pit, who ſhall make war againſt the witneſſes, and ſhall overcome them, and kill them?

Is not the time now introducing, in which it ſhall be ſaid by the angel—*Thruſt in thy ſickle, and reap; for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harveſt of the earth is ripe?*

And the angel thruſt in his ſickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and caſt it into the great wine-preſs of the wrath of God.

And have we not cauſe to fear, that after the finiſhing of the preſent ſixth vial, which dries up the myſtical Euphrates, the order will be iſſued to pour out the ſeventh into the air—as ſome ſuppoſe, upon all the ſubjects of the Prince of the Power of the Air, throughout the world? *And the ſeventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven,*

from the throne, saying—It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.

And do we not begin to see the characters and proceedings opening to view, which fulfil the prophetic declaration, immediately on the fall of Babylon?—*And is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird?*

Is not the time now come, in which, from the many slaughters which are continually taking place, the scene may be supposed to be begun, in view of which saith St. John, *And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.*

To what height of distress the world may yet, in judgment for their disobedience to God, be allowed to come, God only knows:

But in view of the awful, judicial prospect, well may we cry out, *O Lord rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure!* Cover us, O thou gracious and compassionate Redeemer, by the broad hand of thy protecting providence, until the indignation be over-past!

But from these solemn scenes we are all, but especially as many as have good hope in God, allowed to turn off our eye, whilst, on equally sure ground, we are called to contemplate *the blessedness which shall speedily follow.*—To support your confidence on this subject, I need but refer you to the general annunciation of praise from the choirs of heaven, which our subject hath noted, as immediately to follow the destruction of the enemies of God, and of his people. *We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come, because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned!*—

2. In view of our subject may we not reflect, that, however the doctrine of the Millennium—the doctrine of the thousand years of prosperity, promised to the church of Christ, may have been neglected, decried or misunderstood, yet it is a doctrine plainly contain-

ed, and ſolidly eſtabliſhed in the word of God —and as ſuch is entitled to the credit, the ſtudy and embrace of all who believe the ſcriptures to be the unchanging oracles of God.

3. If this doctrine be true, we juſtly conclude, that thoſe miniſters of Chriſt, who, in the ſeveral ages of the church, have been purſuing and enquiring after the glorious Millennial-day, have not been purſuing a ſhadow, nor following a phantom.

4. If they are to be juſtified in their reſearches, and if, whilſt under the clouds of antiquity, they rejoiced in view of the diſtant, yet aſſuredly approaching ſcene, how much more may we be juſtified in ſuch purſuit, and in increaſing joy, whilſt the "reddening ſtreaks of the morning betoken to the weary traveller, that the day is at hand?"

5. If the great Michael of the church intends to uſher in his glorious dominion by the previous accompliſhing of TWO GREAT REVOLUTIONS—the *firſt* outward and political—the *ſecond* inward and ſpiritual; and if he hath already advanced ſo far in the majeſty of his power, as to have completed the *firſt* revolution in this country, through the inſtrumentality of the ſons of men, how

neceſſary and proper, that the *ſecond* ſhould now be undertaken, and carried on through the inſtrumentality of the ſons of God?

Can we, who are miniſters of Chriſt—can the churches of our Lord, throughout this our delightful land—can we unitedly or ſeverally be willing to ſuffer, that the civil and military exertions of our country ſhould contribute more to the proſperity of the Zion of God, than the ſons of Zion themſelves?—Can we be willing that, with the proweſs and dignity of men, theſe ſhould ſo worthily and valiantly have diſcharged the duties allotted them, whilſt we, loitering upon our poſts, refuſe to hear the voice of our illuſtrious Leader, in his word and providence, commanding us to imitate his example, and to preſs forward to exertion, to victory, and to renown?

For a moment let us caſt our eye upon the viſion of St. John reſpecting this matter. *And I ſaw heaven opened*—that is, the ordinances of heaven, or the ſcenes diſplayed in the church of Chriſt, by the miniſters and churches of Chriſt, which, in the language of prophecy, ſignify heaven; as a people of a contrary ſpirit and character are ſet forth by the *earth*, or nations of the earth:

And behold a white horſe, and he that ſat upon him was called Faithful and True; and in righteouſneſs he doth judge and make war. And the armies which were in heaven, that is, in the church militant, and, it may be, triumphant, *followed him upon white horſes*—emblems of valor, of victory, and of triumph —*cloathed in fine linen, white and clean.*—*And out of his mouth goeth a ſharp ſword, that with it he ſhould ſmite the nations; and he ſhall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the wine-preſs of the fierceneſs and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his veſture and on his thigh a name written,* KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.*

If, my Chriſtian Brethren, we profeſs to belong to the armies of the living God—to be in the train of the great Michael of the church, why not preſs on?—Why not keep cloſe to our Leader, that we may be within the hearing of his orders—may imitate his example—may perform exploits before him —may prove ourſelves worthy to hold rank in ſuch an heavenly train?

But *how,* in what manner follow on, you

NOTE.

* For an expoſition of this paſſage, ſee Lowman, Burkit, or Langdon in loco.

may be ready to ſay?—Muſt we take arms?—Muſt we go to war?—Muſt we commence hoſtilities againſt the empires, the kings, the tyrants, the civil and eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhments of the world?—Yes, my brethren, this is our duty, and here is our employment: But always remember, with our valiant file-leader, that, in the accompliſhment of this ſecond revolution, *the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of ſtrong holds; caſting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itſelf againſt the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Chriſt.*

Such, my brethren, are our weapons, and ſuch is our warfare. Happy for the true ſervants of *Chriſt*, that, as yet, they are not called, in this preſent conflict, to engage in the bloody conteſts of ungodly men—not to welter in the ſcenes of war, where the battle of the warrior is, and garments rolled in blood. It may be in the accompliſhment of the *firſt* great political revolution, ſomething like this may be neceſſary; but, in this land, at preſent, we have little to do, but with an armour of truth, of righteouſneſs, and of peace.

But if, in the general conflict, it ſhould

happen that the once vanquiſhed Lion—the political and, I may add too, the Proteſtant Dragon, ſhould return to perſecute the woman which brought forth the MAN-CHILD—the warrior of the world—the pionier of the church; we need not a ſpirit of prophecy to ſay, that the jaws of this inſatiable leviathan ſhall again be broken, in a manner anſwerable to the ſpirit—to the redoubled fury and reiterated ſtrokes of thoſe who, under God, at firſt gave the promiſed hero of civil and religious liberty birth.

If any ſhould aſk on what authority we ground an alluſion to the Proteſtant perſecuting power under the idea or figure of a dragon—I anſwer, That the chapter from whence this language is taken is of a very extenſive and momentous ſignification.

It truly is enveloped in ſome degree of myſtery, as it was undoubtedly deſigned to be, eſpecially, under the characters of the *woman*—the *eagle's wings*—the *wilderneſs*—the *man-child*, and the *dragon*, who ſeeks to devour the ſtruggler as ſoon as he ſhall be born.

But as a key to this chapter, I would humbly, and in the fear of God, preſume to ſay, that, under the character of the woman and

her ſorrows, we have exhibited the ſtate and ſtrugglings of the true church of Chriſt, in every age of the world, in which ſhe hath, or may be called to ſuffer, from the Chriſtian æra until the conſummation of all things. That under the general figure of the dragon we have exhibited the moſt conſiderable enemies and perſecutors of the church of Chriſt in every age; Satan himſelf, that old ſerpent, the Devil, being the prime inſtrument, and firſt mover of the whole. That by the wilderneſs, we are to underſtand a ſtate of ſpiritual dearth and barrenneſs, or thoſe leaves, ſhades, and darkening boughs of ſuperſtition, which have been as the ſhades of a wilderneſs to hinder the ſpiritual growth; or, laſtly, a wilderneſs in the literal and common acceptation of the word. And, by the general figure of a MAN-CHILD, you are to underſtand the particular and ſeveral deliances, which the church of Chriſt, in any, and in every age of the world, hath enjoyed, from its firſt inſtitution until the preſent moment. And, by the two wings of the great eagle, may we not underſtand the ſpecial providence and agency of Almighty God in theſe ſeveral very intereſting events?

In this ſenſe, denoting the power of God in conquering the enemies of his people, and in ſecuring them under the banner of his own protection—the phraſe is uſed in Exodus xix. 4. *Ye have ſeen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on* EAGLE'S WINGS, *and brought you unto myſelf.* And after a long courſe of protection afforded to the people of God, through the wilderneſs of Sinai, and their ſettlement in the promiſed land, it is again ſaid, Deut. xxxii. 9—12. *For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a deſert land, and in the waſte howling wilderneſs: he led him about, he inſtructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle ſtirreth up her neſt, fluttereth over her young, ſpreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; ſo the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no ſtrange god with him.*

Under the ſame idea of the divine agency and protection afforded, ſaith the Pſalmiſt—*Becauſe thou haſt been my help, therefore, in the ſhadow of thy wings, will I rejoice.*

This foundation being laid as a key to the chapter, may we not proceed, and ſay, that the woman denotes the ſtate of the church

in its firſt inſtitution? *And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman cloathed with the ſun;* it may be with the veſtments of the ſun of righteouſneſs; *and the moon under her feet;* the earth and other ſublunary things in their proper place; *and upon her head a crown of twelve ſtars;* guided and governed by the unadulterated doctrines of the twelve apoſtles. In this character, the church of Chriſt at firſt ſtood forth; but ſo ſoon was the truth beclouded—her privileges reſtrained, and her members perſecuted, that ſhe, ſtruggling for civil and religious liberty, is denominated as *being with child*, as *travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.* The character of a woman the church is ſuppoſed to take, as denoting her delicacy—her fruitfulneſs, and her need of protection.

But under the laſhes of paganiſm and heatheniſh tyranny, ſhe was obliged to groan out the ten perſecutions, until, in the perſon of Conſtantine the Great, the firſt Chriſtian emperor, ſhe brought forth her firſt-born, and lived, for a while, under the happy dominion of civil and religious liberty.

And who would have thought that, in proceſs of time, proſperity would have pro-

duced ſuch pride, dominion and tyranny in ſpiritual, and in earthly things; even in thoſe who have but juſt now emerged from a ſuffering and perſecuted ſtate?

But, alas! behold the Pagan Dragon reſtored to life, in the papal, anti-chriſtian image! And under this papal, perſecuting power behold the ſeries of heatheniſh perſecution again renewed!

How did the woman again labor to be delivered, and what were the effects of her labor, under papal tyranny, but the glorious reformation which took place in the ſixteenth century, under the preaching of Wickliff, John Huſs, and Jerom; and afterwards carried on by Luther, Calvin, and others?

And ſhall it, may it now be ſaid, that the ſpirit of proteſtantiſm—the hero of deliverance from the thraldom of Popery, ever become ſo degenerated as, in the ſmalleſt degree, to act over the part of its Papal and Pagan predeceſſors? Let the perſecutions of civil and eccleſiaſtical power, under Mary, James, Laud, and others, whilſt they ſtruggled for uncontrouled dominion in church and ſtate, "in things civil and eccleſiaſtical," anſwer to this point!

The ſufferings of the Proteſtants, under

this new-formed intolerant power, do well anſwer to the character of the church—of the woman in her ſuffering and perſecuted ſtate.

But, behold! how ſoon does the perſecuted woman receive an anſwer to her ſolemn appeals, and reiterated cries? See, on the wings of a bounteous providence, how ſhe is wafted acroſs the Atlantic, and ſettled in theſe peaceful American abodes!—Happy, that as the time of general redemption comes, her enemies are held in partial reſtraint.—Here ſhe is purſued and perſecuted only in outward and civil things; though what deſigns might have been formed againſt her religious freedom we cannot ſay.

In a word, behold the hero of civil and religious liberty born in theſe weſtern climes! And ſee him already on his way back to demoliſh the proud and haughty eſtabliſhments of civil and eccleſiaſtical tyranny, which have in theſe ſeveral forms, perſecuted his mother, whilſt ſhe labored to give him birth!

And is it too much to ſuppoſe, that, in his progreſs back, he will demoliſh all that is contrary to the ſpirit of the truth—to the intent and deſign of that power, under whoſe auſpices he now proceeds, conquering and

to conquer; whether ſuch counterfeits of truth be found in Proteſtant, in Papal, or in Pagan Rome? Eſpecially, whilſt you read, that this hero is to *rule all nations with a rod of iron, and is caught up to God and to his throne*?—If you requeſt any further illuſtrations to authenticate this interpretation, attend to the declaration, that when the Dragon, in his multi-formed character, was caſt out, was conquered, diſappointed, or diſgraced, he perſecuted the woman that bro't forth the man-child. And thus, my audience did the Pagan Dragon, in the perſon and perſecutions of Julian the Apoſtate; and thus did the Papal Dragon, in all the perſecutions, thunders, and councils, by which he hath vexed and deſtroyed the Proteſtants; and thus has the Proteſtant Dragon done, not only in heavy perſecutions for conſcience ſake, but, eſpecially, in the flood of troops, armies and fleets—Britons and Iriſh, Brunſwickers and Waldeckers, Heſſians and Anſpachers, which this red dragon vomited forth for the deſtruction of the woman in the American wilderneſs, during the late unprovoked and cruel war; and thus is this Proteſtant Dragon, even now, but too ready to expreſs of his perſecuting temper, in open-

ing upon theſe defenceleſs ſtates the Algerine Corſairs—in committing depredations upon our commerce, and in letting looſe, or in countenancing their ſavage allies, in making war upon our weſtern frontiers. But we believe in God, our hope and confidence is in him, and to his protecting power and providence do we, therefore, humbly appeal.

You will not now doubt of the propriety of the alluſion, juſt now hinted at, reſpecting ing the perſecuting power of the Proteſtant Dragon—nor at all deny the propriety of our holding ourſelves in lively and animated readineſs to break the jaws of this leviathan, as God may give us power, ſhould he attempt again to break our peace.

And if any ſhould be diſpoſed to aſk what has become of the eagle, on whoſe wings the perſecuted woman was born into the American wilderneſs, may it not be anſwered, that ſhe hath taken her ſtation upon the broad ſeal of the United States; and from thence has perched upon the pediment of the firſt government-houſe, dedicated to the dominion of civil and religious liberty, where ſhe is ſtill to be ſeen, an emblem of the protection of Providence towards our preſent government, and towards this our happy land.

If any ſhould be diſpoſed, further, to aſk whether the dragon of the regions below, even that old ſerpent called the Devil, and Satan, is to be ſeen in any other form than as animating the dragons—the combinations of civil and eccleſiaſtical power, in the many external injuries they have wrought againſt the church of God on the earth? I anſwer, yes, in every age of the church, whether her external ſtate has been peaceful or troubleſome: The errors in doctrine—the breaches upon the purity of Chriſtian practice—the ſciſms, diviſions and diſcords in churches—the prejudice, hatred and malice which have, at times, prevailed in the church, have been, for the moſt part, but the ebullitions of Satan, the great dragon of dragons, who continually goeth about, as a roaring lion, ſeeking whom he may devour; and hapleſs ſtate the church, too frequently, has been in, that even within her own boſom, the Devil himſelf ſhould find ſo many willing inſtruments of his pleaſure, agents of his infernal craft. Look abroad upon our churches, and behold the dearth of religion—the want of unity, animation and zeal amongſt both miniſters and people; and pray, oh fervently pray, that when, as at the preſent time, the enemy ſhall

come in like a flood, the ſpirit of the Lord, in his word, in his miniſters and churches, may lift up a ſtandard againſt him.

But returning to the important ſubject of the *ſecond* great revolution, after which it is our duty conſtantly to labor, may we not add, in view of the example of our late political ſtruggle—

If, then, noble exertions for the firſt revolution have been made by our brethren, guided by heaven in the field, and in the cabinet; are not we now, as Chriſtians, and as miniſters, to be guided?—Is it not full time, that we ſhould be led, by the zeal of their noble example, whilſt we fight the battles of the Lord of Hoſts, in our cloſets and in our families—in our churches and in our pulpits?

Purſuing this object, let us reaſon the point, for a moment, with yonder infidel—Let us aſk what more evidence he needs of the truth of the ſcriptures, than to ſee the events, long ſince predicted, daily fulfilling before his eyes?—Let us aſk him to read a page or two in a late publication, on the ſubject of prophecy, as the teſtimony of Jeſus.*

NOTE.

* See Hinſdale's Diſco. A. P. vol. iv. page 128.

" Where are now thoſe renounced cities, Nineveh, Babylon and Tyre, whoſe deſolation was ſo often denounced by the prophets? —What is now the condition of Jeruſalem and Judea?—Are they not *trodden down of the Gentiles*, and likely to be ſtill trodden down, until *the times that the Gentiles ſhall be fulfilled?* How remarkably do the actions and ſtate of the Turks, who have ſo long trodden them down, agree to what was predicted of them? *He ſhall come with horſemen, and many ſhips, and ſhall overflow and paſs over.* He ſhall enter into the glorious land, and many countries ſhall be overthrown. Do you not find it even ſo? And that he hath ſtretched out his hand over the land of Egypt, with the *Lybian at his ſteps*, whilſt *the Arabians ſtill eſcape out of his hand.*

Hath not the ſtate of Egypt, for many paſt ages, been juſt as was foretold? *a baſe, and the baſeſt of kingdoms*, without a ruler of her own, and *waſted by ſtrangers?*

Obſerve the *fourth* kingdom of Daniel's viſion broken into ten. Behold that wonderful power, *diverſe from the firſt*, which hath ariſen up among them, with a *look more ſtout than his fellows*, and a *mouth ſpeaking great things*, even great words againſt the

MOST HIGH: that power which weareth out the ſaints of the MOST HIGH, and changeth times and laws. Behold him *caſting down the truth to the ground; forbidding to marry,* and commanding to *abſtain from meats:* Yea, behold him *ſitting in the temple,* in the church *of God, and ſhewing himſelf* that he is God, whoſe coming is with *ſigns and lying wonders.* And remember that the ſeat of this horrid tyrannical power is *that great city which ſtandeth on ſeven mountains,* and which, in the days of the prophecy, *reigned over all the kings of the earth.*—In fine,

"You ſee the church of God ſubſiſting, at this day, in the world—the ſame church which, before Chriſt, was continued in the ſeed of Abraham, and which, at and after his coming, took that new form which Daniel ſaw under the name of the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN; and hath ever ſince ſubſiſted among the Gentiles. You know the preſervation and final prevalence of this ſociety, together with the hoſtile attempts, and final ruin of all her enemies, have been predicted by all the prophets from Moſes to St. John.

"Now, when ye ſee this very church preſent in exiſtence and enlargement, after all the attempts which have been made, in all man-

ner of ways, and through a long ſucceſſion of ages, for her deſtruction; and notwithſtanding ſhe has all the ſeeds of deſolation in herſelf, has often been extremely feeble, and in the hand of her enemies, and at the point of death: When you ſee this, you behold an event, which, though perfectly correſponding to hundreds of ſcripture-prophecies and promiſes, is yet UNPARALLELED IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD. Suffer me to repeat, IT IS UNPARALLELED IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD. The moſt unlikely event, when it was foretold, ever to have exiſted, and which indeed never could have exiſted, but by the marvellous providence of God, defeating the influence of natural cauſes, that he might fulfil the deſigns of his mercy—that he might *confirm the words of his ſervants, and perform the counſel of his meſſengers;* and, at the ſame time, that he might *fruſtrate the tokens of the liars, and make diviners mad,* and cloſe the mouth of infidels in *perpetual ſilence.*

" Thus is the ſpirit of prophecy the teſtimony of Jehovah to the ſacred ſcriptures as his OWN ORACLES, and to Jeſus as the Chriſt, and of conſequence to the Chriſtian Religion as DIVINE."

And where ſhall the miniſters of Chriſt next turn their attention, in order ſucceſsfully to carry on the purpoſes of this ſecond, this inward and ſpiritual revolution of the heart?

Unleſs the great Michael of the church ſhould aid, our hopes of ſucceſs would be loſt; but ſo long as we have his promiſe—*Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world*—we are encouraged to go on.

Let us, then, make our addreſſes to men of underſtanding—to men of ſound judgment, and rectitude of heart, and ſolicit the force of their intereſt and example.

Let us even attempt to touch the ambition of the ambitious, by pointing them to the robes of diſtinction, and inconceivable marks of favor in the regions of glory, which await the man whom the king delights to honor.

Let us aſſail the caſtle of the miſer, and tell him, that in the regions of glory are rivers of treaſure, floods of ſalvation, a thouſand fold more regaling to the appetites of the ſoul, than earthly ſubſtance can be to the body.

Let us guide the wandering views of the man of buſineſs, by ſetting before him the ne-

ceſſity of ſeeking *firſt the kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs, that all theſe things* may be added.

May we not arouſe the attention of the ſtupid, the obſtinate, and ſenſual, by painting to them, in lively colours, the danger to which they are expoſed, as well as the baſeneſs of *earthly* and *ſenſual* gratifications, in compariſon with thoſe which are intellectual and heavenly?

May we not ſolicit the aid of the improved, the elevated, and the polite, by aſſuring them that a field of improvement, proſpects of elevation, and the moſt finiſhed examples of heavenly grace, are all preſented to their embrace, in the purſuit of the rewards promiſed by our exalted king?

And, laſt of all, may we not, with high proſpects of ſucceſs, humbly ſuggeſt, that by the example and influence of the female world, even of the moſt delicate and refined, much might be done to further the purpoſes of heaven?—If any of our fair audience ſhould ſay, "We have not yet learned the paths of piety ourſelves: we are, alas! but too far from hope of ſetting good example to others, or of aiding the intereſts of virtue, by the feeble efforts of what, at beſt,

can be only ſtiled the improvements of nature, deſtitute of the refinements of heavenly grace:"—Let us pray them to lend their hand to ſome guardian angel, who may lead them, perhaps, abroad to view the wondrous traces of wiſdom, and of power, in all creation's handy works; and when, from the oracles of truth, they become farther convinced of the being of a God—of his equitable, holy, juſt and good laws—of their own imperfections of heart and life—of their final accountableneſs at the bar of an impartial judge; they may be willing to follow their heavenly guide into the retirements of ſecret devotion, and there unboſom the ſoul to God, imploring the pardon and ablution of ſin, through the blood of the Lamb. What though a tear of contrition find its way, evincing the deep woundings of the heart, purſued by an upbraiding conſcience, for time and talents miſimproved—for neglect of God, the univerſal Creator—for neglect of the overtures of proffered mercy—for the grievings of the holy ſpirit of God, occaſioned by the pride of the heart, refuſing to bow to the ſceptre of ſovereign grace? What though, from cauſes like theſe, a tear of contrition might fall, and the boſom heave in

ſighs of penitence and prayer? If pardon for the ſoul, and acceptance with God ſhould be the happy fruit, and a life of unexampled piety the permanent effects—how intereſting the change—how promiſing the proſpect!

With ſupport of numbers, and example of graces ſuch as theſe, with what ſucceſs might the advocates of truth plead the cauſe of heaven, and how ſoon might we expect that in the place of unbelief, ſtupor, inſenſibility and hardneſs of heart; we ſhould diſcover the ſeeds of the happy wiſhed-for revolution already to be ſown, and the effects to appear in full and abundant ſheaves of heavenly grace!

But—whither do I run, leading my audience—fathers and brethren, it may be, into paths leſs promiſing than thoſe in which they have been accuſtomed, ſucceſsfully to tread!—I pauſe, then; nay, I draw to a concluſion by ſaying, in the words of a reſpected father in the church of God, on the ſubject of Miniſterial Character and Duty,*—"It requires no ſmall attention and labor to ſeek out fit and acceptable words, as the preacher expreſſes it, to ſtir up the attention of the

NOTE.

* Witherſpoon, vol. i. A. P. page 19.

inconſiderate—to awaken, ſecure, and convince obſtinate ſinners—to unmaſk the covered hearts of hypocrites—to ſet right the erring, and encourage the fearful."

Notwithſtanding this, may we not all, animated by the proſpects of promiſed aid, go forth manfully, to fight the battles of the Lord—to play the man for God, and for the cities of our God; knowing that in our faithful exertions the name of the Lord is honored, though Iſrael be not gathered.

Finally, my brethren, "Have we ſeen the ſcriptures ſealed by paſt events; let it exalt our faith into a full aſſurance, that all the prophecies which remain, and eſpecially thoſe which ſpeak of JESUS' FUTURE GLORY, ſhall receive, in due time, their perfect accompliſhment.

"This GRAND ÆRA is approaching with a ſpeed rapid as the flight of time. The night is far ſpent, the day is at hand. In this proſpect, with what ardour ſhould we pray—THY KINGDOM COME;"* and in the fervency of our united devotions, may we

NOTE.

* Hinſdale, A. P. vol. iv. p. 133, 134.

not add—*thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven; for thine*, gracious God! *is the kingdom*, and thine is *the power*, and thine shall be the *glory*, world without end. AMEN.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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ERRATUM.—Page 344, line 5, after the word *ſuppoſed*, add, *have propheſied in ſackcloth.*

THE subscribing EDITOR to the AMERICAN PREACHER presents his most affectionate and Christian regards to all his Fathers and Brethren in the Ministry; and, especially, to those who have aided in contributing Materials for the Execution of the Plan of that Work thus far; and is happy in being able to assure them, that their Labors have been, to such a degree, acceptable to the Public, that scarcely a Copy of the three First Volumes is to be found for Sale; and repeated applications are made to the Printer for further supplies. The Fourth Volume is now circulating, and promises fair to secure, and to increase the Reputation of this, generally, interesting Work.

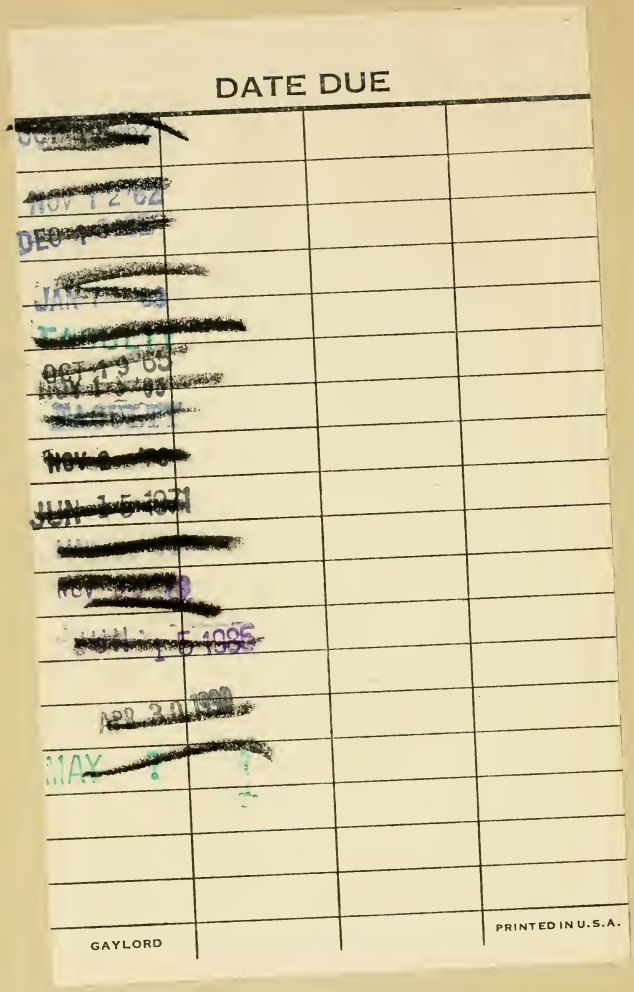
As the present is a Day full of great Events, and a general attention to the dictates of Prophecy seems to be gone forth, it is proposed, that a Volume of Discourses, on the Subject of Prophecy, with particular application to Predictions now fulfilling, or yet to be fulfilled, shall be prepared, and issued, perhaps, at the close of the present Year.

Any of our Christian Brethren, who would contribute to the Execution of such a Plan, might be instrumental in reviving the Cause of Truth—in animating their Brethren, and of comforting the Church of God; and would receive the most grateful Acknowledgments from the Friends and Promoters of the proposed Volume.

Shortly will be put to Press a Volume of Discourses, preached on occasion of the late Visitation of the City of Philadelphia by the Yellow Fever, entitled, "A Comment on the Providence of God, in the late Visitation of the City of Philadelphia, by the Yellow Fever: or, Instructive Lessons to the People of the United States, on the Subject of that solemn Event, comprised, in a Number of Discourses, preached by several Ministers of Christ, on that Occasion, who are willing to leave this Testimony as a Memorial of the tragical Scene which gave it Birth."

Any of our Christian Ministers, who are willing to aid in the furtherance of either of the foregoing Designs, may be assured that their Contributions will meet a most friendly welcome, and be duly noticed in View of forwarding the Design for which they may be sent.

ELIZABETH TOWN, *May* 1, 1794.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